RECOLLECTIONS

OF

LITERARY CHARACTERS

AND

CELEBRATED PLACES.

BY

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OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.



RECOLLECTIONS

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ETC.

CHAPTER I.

BASING HOUSE: ITS BESIEGERS AND BESIEGED.

The Somersets were a great and gallant race; but there were others fired with as true a loyalty and as noble an enthusiasm as the veteran of Raglan; and it is remarkable, that, among the most illustrious of the loyalist families in England, few lines are wholly extinct. The Paulets still exist in their high station; and the Stanleys have maintained their great position in spite of losses, and imprisonments, and humiliations in ancient days. There seems to be a sort of inherent vitality in the stock—a mental and corporeal energy.

I returned towards the neighbourhood of London by Basingstoke. Of the great "eye-sorrow" to the Parliamentarians scarcely a trace remains to spend a moral

or to make a verse upon. Basing House was carted and cleared away even before its gallant lord had closed his eyes in death. Its materials were freely offered to whomsoever should come and remove the traces of so much magnanimity on the one hand, or cruelty and rapacity on the other.

Yet I lingered some time in the neighbourhood. The ancient town of Basingstoke, standing at the junction of five roads, commanded a considerable trade in the time of the civil wars. Interesting in modern days to lovers of literature as the birthplace of the lettered Warton family, it was important in those of Cromwell from its trade in corn, and its position as a sort of key to the south-west. About two miles from Basingstoke stood the far-famed house of Basing. This, we are told by a modern historian, had long infested the parliament in those quarters, and had been especially "a great eye-sorrow" to the trade of London and the western parts. It may have proved in the decline of life, and when conscience stood by his bedside, and reviewed, till reason broke down under the stern array, the misdeeds of the past, an "eye-sorrow" to Cromwell himself. Yes, if ever outraged innocence and wanton, savage wickedness called for Divine justice to avenge it signally, the destruction of Basing was the deed.

Old Basing House was distinguished in remote time as the scene of military exploits. In the reign of Henry III. it was fortified by royal permission. It was not until the time of Henry VI. that it became

the property of the Paulets, who acquired it by marriage. The place from whence this family derived their name no longer exists, or, in the words of Leland, the mansion is "clene doune, though still it beareth the name of Paulette, and is three miles from Bridgwater."

The history of the House of Paulet is destitute of all romance and adventure until the Great Rebellion. Sir William Paulet was the first remarkable person of his race. He was created by Henry VIII. Baron St. John of Basing. Edward VI. added the honours of Earl of Wiltshire and Marquess of Winchester; Mary never withdrew from him her favour; and he officiated as lord treasurer to Elizabeth not fewer than thirty years. He said of himself, "I was the willow and not the oak;" and posterity acknowledges that he understood the courtier's craft thoroughly,—ay, and taught it to others also.

But, not to good fortune alone, or even to suppleness of character, was the prosperity of the great marquess to be attributed. It was the "result of a sincere loyalty; of a sagacity which confines itself to its proper objects; and of a zeal in the public service wholly uninfluenced by ambition." His life was extended to his ninety-seventh year; and it is a remarkable fact, that of the hundred and three descendants whom he left, not *one* ever met with the too common fate of loyalty in those days. "The axe has never yet *reeked* with the blood of a Paulet, nor have their estates in any instance fallen under the scourge of attainder."

The following lines, preserved by Dr. Birch, com-

prised, according to tradition, the old marquess's political craft, and explained his success and security:—

> "Wine and women I forswear:
> My heels and feet I keep from cold,
> No marvel then though I be old;
> I am a willow, not an oak,
> I chide, but never hurt with stroke."

During the course of this long career, the individual of whom we write erected at Basing, where he died, that famous residence, the splendour of which was the pride of England, and even of England's queen. So vast an expense in living here was entailed upon his successors, that, according to Camden, they took a certain means of reducing the burden. "It was so overpowered," says the chronicler, "by its own weight, that they have been forced to pull down a part of it." Of what it was, even in this reduced condition, a survey taken so late as 1698 may afford some slight idea; and from this it appears, that the area of the entire works, including the gardens and entrenchments, occupied fourteen acres and a half.

The interior of Basing House fully corresponded to the stateliness of its exterior form. The rooms were completely furnished; a circumstance which, in our own times, we should take for granted, but which was by no means implied in those ruder days; and when the immense extent of the buildings is considered, this assertion appears by no means to be matter of course. In one of the apartments was a bed which cost one thousand three hundred pounds. "Popish books many"

—such was the account of the famous Mr. Peters, who described Basing to the parliament—"with copes, and such utensils;" in truth, the house stood in its full pride.

In this splendid abode, the first Marquess of Winchester entertained Queen Elizabeth "with all good cheer;" and so greatly was the queen delighted both with her host and her reception, that she playfully exclaimed, "If my lord treasurer were but a young man, I could find in my heart to have him for a husband before any man in England." The scythe of death carried off, even in the lifetime of Elizabeth, the three noble successors of the first marquess; but she lived again to visit Basing, and again to entail, not only upon her subjects, but on the royal treasury, grievous expenses, regretted by all wise councillors. Magnificent preparations were made for the expensive honour of her presence, and throughout thirteen days the ruinous revelry was carried on. During her sojourn there, the Duc de Biron, ambassador from France, accompanied by the Count d'Auvergne, the natural son of Charles IX., and by a great retinue of noblemen and gentlemen, arrived in the neighbourhood of Basing. They took up their abode in the Vine, Hampshire, then the residence of the Sandys, and now of the Chute family. To this house, seven score beds and furniture, brought "by the willing and obedient people of the countrie of Southampton," were conveyed in two days; whilst plate and hangings were sent from the Tower and Hampton Court, at the queen's bidding. From

the Vine, so called from its being the spot on which vines were first planted in the reign of the Emperor Probus, the Duc de Biron repaired to Basing, where he was present at the reception of the queen. He was conducted to this his first interview by the sheriff of the county, whom the queen had despatched to meet him. Then came Elizabeth forth, royally mounted, with her accustomed state. As she approached the appointed spot, where De Biron awaited her greeting, the high sheriff, who rode before her, bareheaded, checked his horse, and, supposing that her majesty would then have saluted the duke, brought the cavalcade to a stand. But Elizabeth, who well understood the art of effect, and whose pride of deportment was based, not on a petty self-importance, but upon a knowledge of the weakness of others, marked her displeasure at this arrangement. It was not her place to offer, *first*, to the subject of any other sovereign, a signal of her notice. She bade the high sheriff (one can conceive the tribulation of the good country gentleman) "Go on!" Then she rode forward, the duke following her, bareheaded, for about twenty yards. Elizabeth vouchsafed to look round, and, taking off her mask, courteously saluted the ambassador.

At Basing House, Elizabeth made ten knights; the greatest number that she had ever dubbed at one time. Her days were passed in returning De Biron's visits, and in hunting and banqueting with the ambassador. And she boasted at her departure that she had done that in Hampshire which neither she, nor any of her ancestors, nor any prince in

Christendom, had ever done elsewhere; she "had, in her progresses, entertained a royal ambassador, and had royally entertained him." And long did her subjects feel the truth of this boast. During the following year, the poor marquess was obliged to dispose of a portion of his property. That which he selected was the estate of the dissolved monastery of Augustine Friars, seated in Broad Street Ward, in London, and granted by Henry VIII. to the first marquess. This house was called sometimes Winchester House, sometimes Paulet House. The purchaser was John Swinnerton, a branch of the ancient family of Swinnerton, in Staffordshire; whence descended the celebrated Mrs. Fitzherbert.

The marquess was embarrassed also by the expense of a numerous family. He had six sons; of whom the third, John, succeeded him. But the present Marquess of Winchester is descended from a younger brother, Henry, who left issue, John, fifth marquess; and the defender of Basing was, according to Dryden, one of those truly great and good men whose light shines forth resplendent in a naughty world, in which they are but sojourners for a high purpose. Example: —

"Such souls are rare, but mighty patterns, given
To earth, were meant for ornaments in Heaven."

He was, as in his prose epitaph it is expressed, "a man of exemplary piety towards God, and of inviolable fidelity towards his sovereign."

We hear little of Basing House or its noble owners

from this period up to the beginning of the great civil war. Their hospitalities had much embarrassed them; nor was it till the accession of the fifth marquess that any decided progress was made in clearing the estates. He, indeed, being an excellent manager, just contrived to get himself free when Charles I. raised his standard. The marquess took his part at once. He put into the king's hands all his savings. He caused to be engraved upon every pane of glass in his house the motto of which his descendants are still justly proud,—"*Aymez loyaulté.*" He stood and repulsed two assaults, having no garrison to help him except his own domestic servants; and cheerfully consented to the fortification of his residence, and to its establishment as a place of arms in the hands of the king. Commanding the great road from the west part of London, it stood directly in the line of communication; and its gallant proprietor being a Roman Catholic, the Puritans affected to consider it as much a religious duty, as it certainly was of importance to their cause, to wrest it from him.

In November, 1643, Sir William Waller for nine days lay before the house, and, after three times attempting to storm it, was repulsed to Farnham. In the following spring, a still more formidable endeavour was made to starve the garrison, by ravaging all the country between Oxford and Basingstoke. The marquess, therefore, petitioned the lords of the council to provide for his relief and the safety of his person; and his entreaties were seconded by his lady, who remained in Oxford, and were backed by all the Roman Catholics

in that city. The council were well disposed to grant the required aid, but many difficulties stood in the way. Basing was forty miles distant from Oxford, and a strong garrison of the enemy lay at Abingdon: so that it appeared impossible to send a company to Basing without being intercepted. New importunities from the marquess, and an intimation that he could not hold it ten days, led, however, to one of the most gallant undertakings even of that memorable and chivalrous period. Colonel Gage declared, in the council,—"That though he thought the service full of hazard, especially on the return, yet, if a good troop or two of horse could be raised, by enlisting their lordships' servants, he would, if there were nobody else thought fitter for it, undertake the conduct of them himself, and hoped he should give a good account of it;" and as not only the courage but the prudence of Colonel Gage could be depended upon, the noble offer was cheerfully accepted.

The garrison at Basing, meantime, offered a gallant defence against Colonel Norton, whose forces advanced so near as to carry away three horses from the park. The place was fortified rather with strength than regularity; but the marquess made the most of his scanty means. He divided his people into three bodies, keeping two-thirds on duty, whilst the other rested. Every vulnerable point was guarded; and continually, after nightfall, the enemy's quarters were broken up, and many a house in which they sheltered themselves committed to the flames.

Meanwhile the gallant Colonel Gage was leading his volunteers from Oxford. They consisted of the confidential servants of the nobles who attended on the king, with two hundred and fifty gentlemen, brave men and true, all masked; amounting in the whole to four hundred. They had put on, before quitting Oxford, orange scarves, hoping to be mistaken for the parliament's men; but, on encountering a small band of the enemy, they forgot that purpose, and fell upon their foes, so that news of their approach was carried to Basing. On, however, they marched, the horsemen often dismounting to allow the foot to ride, and others taking up men behind them. Nevertheless their weariness was excessive.

They left Oxford on Monday night, and on Wednesday morning arrived within a mile of Basing; where a notice reached them that an auxiliary force which they had expected from Winchester could not venture so far. This was a great disappointment, and broke all Colonel Gage's measures. He had resolved to attack the enemy on several points at once: he now determined to fall on them in one body. With this view he formed in battalion, and riding to every squadron to give them a proper address for the occasion (uttered with the grace of a hero and cavalier), he commanded each of them to tie a white tape or handkerchief above the elbow of his right arm, and giving the word, "St. George!" prepared to march towards the house. The word and the signal of the handkerchief had been communicated to the marquess, lest

in his sallies he should fall upon his friends. They had not marched far, when, upon a gentle rising, they perceived five cornets of horse standing in good order to receive them; and, before any impression could be made on these, the colonel had to pass through a lane lined with musqueteers. But he *did* pass. The horse, sustaining a good fire, charged the enemy home; and, in spite of the known courage of Norton, drove them from the field. A free entrance into the house was gained on that side, where the colonel stayed only to salute the marquess, and to put in the ammunition he had brought with him. He retired to Basingstoke, where he found ample stores of provisions, of which he despatched as much as he could find horses or carts to transport to the house, together with fourteen barrels of powder, some muskets, forty or fifty head of cattle, and above a hundred sheep.

The marquess, thus recruited, continued to defend his mansion; and the Royalists throughout the country gave it the appellation of Loyalty House; yet, beneath its roof there beat one dastardly, dishonourable heart; and the marquess discovered in his own brother, Lord Edward, a base plotter against himself and his sovereign—that unworthy son of a noble race having engaged to betray Basing House to the enemy. This scheme was disclosed by Sir Richard Greenvil, who was sent by the Parliament to take Basing; but he, proving false to his employers, went to Oxford, where he apprised the king of the plot, and the conspiracy was thence disclosed to the marquess, who immediately

seized his brother, and all the other conspirators, whom he punished, contenting himself with turning his brother out of the house.

The siege went on, but the enemy began to be grievously discouraged. Nevertheless, in Colonel Norton's absence, the acting colonel, Herbert Morley, ambitious for the honour of taking Basing, thought proper, in the month of July, to summon the marquess. It was a fast day among the Royalists, when the following demand was sent in to the beleaguered castle:—

"My Lord,—To avoid the effusion of Christian blood, I have thought fit to send your Lordship this summons, to demand Basing House to be delivered to me for the use of the King and Parliament. If this be refused, the ensuing inconveniences will rest upon yourself. I desire your speedy answer. And rest, my lord,

"Your humble servant,

"HERBERT MORLEY."

To which the following fearless reply was returned:—

"Sir,—It is a crooked demand, and shall receive its answer suitable. I keep the house in the right of my sovereign, and will do it in despite of your forces. Your letter I will preserve in testimony of your rebellion.

"WINCHESTER."

This letter was endorsed with the words, "Haste! haste! haste! post haste." It was greeted by Morley with a "choller," which "spoke from his gunnes." Such is the expression used in a journal of the siege, drawn up and printed under the authority of the marquess in the following year.

For some days after this, the enemy's cannon played on the water-house; whilst a bonfire in the park, and two vollies, bespoke the welcome to Norton, who returned that day.

The garrison were now becoming exhausted. It was in vain that the marquess, by his bravery in continual sallies, and by his admirable arrangements, tried to keep up the spirits of his men—their strength had given way. It became necessary to divide the duty from forty-eight hours into twenty-four,—the gentlemen and troopers sharing alike, and the gay cavaliers participating in the sallies with the foot soldiers, and going out with muskets or brownbill, as it happened; keeping their horses for seven weeks fed with grass and sedge. "Whilst in the nights they cut under command of the rebells' workes with hazard of their lives."

The marquess, meantime, ran every risk, and exposed himself to danger with the coolness of a veteran. On the 3rd of July, 1644, a musket-ball penetrated his clothes; a few days afterwards he was wounded. But his spirits remained undaunted.

Perceiving it to be the intention of the rebels rather to starve than storm the house, the sallies were resumed with a desperate energy; and the enemy now found it necessary to double their guard. "In the parke side," writes the annalist of the siege, "their lines advanced to our platformes, and their work by the wood forwarded; liberally bestowing great shot, stones, and granades, of which they send us of three severall sortes, besides their hand granades." During all these en-

counters, the enemy were fast diminishing in numbers. At length Colonel Norton abandoned the attack; he was succeeded by Colonel Harvey, with no better fortune. Finally, Sir William Waller, "the Conqueror," as he was called, advanced to beleaguer Basing House, with an army of seven thousand three hundred men.

The eyes of all England were now turned upon this memorable siege; and Charles, amid the various events of the war, found none so interesting. The Parliamentarians themselves reverenced the fearless and disinterested marquess; and "blushed," whilst they looked around in vain among their numerous partisans for a volunteer who fought neither for glory nor spoil; who had everything to lose and nothing to gain; and who had turned suddenly round from the tedious and painful redemption of his patrimony to ruin it in the cause of his sovereign. Yet was this no matter of surprise, for the man who is faithful to his private trusts is generally certain to shine when the stern conflict between duty and interest calls him into a public career.

Waller was repulsed by the bravery of the heroes of Basing, and his threats only heightened their courage.

The place began to be deemed impregnable; there was a conviction among the garrison that their defence was prospered by a Power higher than man. "Seldome," observes the historian of the siege, "hath been a siege wherein the preservation of the place more immediately might be imputed to the hand of God."

It was, however, destined that the cause of monarchy should, in this kingdom, fail for a season. The battle of

Naseby broke the spirits of the Royalists, and contributed to render Cromwell invincible. Hitherto it seemed that "God had chosen the weak to confound the strong;" but Basing was soon destined to fall—to be for ever razed off from the earth, for Cromwell advanced against it in person.

The Marquess of Winchester, when apprised of the large force that was coming against him, seems to have felt that all was lost. Cromwell, well called the "Conqueror," had acquired that name, far less by his personal courage than by his deep policy and admirably clear intellect. His own regiment, "Cromwell's Ironsides," owed much to his instruction in military tactics; they were men whose shrewd intellects he had cultivated before he led them to the field; still more, they were fanatics, into whose half-educated and presumptuous minds he had instilled that frantic enthusiasm which was at once their motive and their bond. He had tried their metal before he trusted them in combat. The sobriety of his troop, their hardy habits, their exact discipline, their fond attachment to their general, his intimate acquaintance with their names and characters, and the interest he professed to take in their welfare, all combined to cement that compact, without which no arm of flesh can prevail. And at the head of this regiment he appeared before Basing.

The religion of the Ironsides, however expressive in phrases and fastings, was no guarantee of their mercy; whilst the desecration of Peterborough and Ely had already shown which way Cromwell's faith tended.

The barbarities which he licensed in Ireland, "where his progress was one of blood and misery," attest that no sudden impulse, no flush of success palliated his cruelty — it was a part of his nature.

With all his fiercer feelings excited, Cromwell marched upon Basing. Winchester and its castle were taken. This was on the 28th of September, or; as Cromwell calls it, "The Lord's-Day," 1645. That city had surrendered, greatly to Cromwell's satisfaction, for, as he wrote to the Speaker, "it is very likely it would have cost much blood to have gained it by storm." Flushed with victory, "the lieutenant-general," (I here borrow the words of Mr. Carlyle), "gathering all the artillery he can lay hold of, firing about two or three hundred shot at some given point, till he sees a hole made, and then storming like a fire-flood — he, perhaps, may manage it."

On the 14th of October, the following memorable words were written by Cromwell to Lenthall, then Speaker: — "Sir, I thank God I can give you a good account of Basing." It now remains a mournful task to record those acts of destruction of which this "good account" is composed.

After the batteries were placed, the different posts were settled for "the storm," for no terms of surrender were proposed. In three different places was the assault made; and, at six o'clock in the morning, the signal for firing was given. The men fell on with great resolution and cheerfulness; "and we took," relates Cromwell, "the two houses, without any

considerable loss to ourselves." When Colonel Pickering had stormed the new house, passed through and had taken the gate off the old house, the besieged summoned a parley, which was refused.

In the meantime, an assault was made by two regiments on the strongest work, where the marquess kept his court of guard. The garrison were driven out. Then the besiegers drew their ladders after them, and got over another work and the house wall before they could enter. In this attack, Sir Hardress Waller, who commanded one of Cromwell's regiments, was wounded. Then the troops rushed into the house, filled its courts, crowded into its chambers, and glutted the long-cherished vengeance of their leaders in that one dark hour. Above them rose the fine old towers which had so often defied them.

In the several rooms, and about the house, lay seventy-four persons, butchered, — some at rest, others expiring in agonies; the brave and disinterested defenders of a failing cause. "There lay upon the ground Major Cuffle, a man of great account amongst the cavaliers, and a notorious papist: he was slain by the hands of Major Harrison, a godly and gallant gentleman — all know him; and Robinson the player, who, a little before the storm, was known to be mocking and scorning the Parliament and our army." (Such are the words of Mr. Peters, who was employed to take a survey of Basing.) On this poor actor they took, indeed, a stern revenge for a few light words. In the midst of the carnage, eight or nine gentlewomen were seen

"running forth together" for aid. These fell into the hands of the common soldiers. Whilst cries of anguish ascended to the roof of those chambers, once resounding to the cheerful voices of an honoured and prosperous family, a lady, the daughter of a Dr. Griffith, raised her voice, and, by her railing, "provoked our soldiers," writes the saintly Peters, "into a further passion."

The work of pillage continued until Tuesday night, and rich was the booty. One soldier had one hundred and twenty pieces of gold for his share; others, plate; others, jewels. Among the rest, one got three bags of silver, of which he (not being able to keep his counsel) was soon pillaged by the rest. The stores of wheat and provisions in the house were sold at a high rate to the country people; but the markets were soon overstocked, and the price fell. Indeed, provisions for years, rather than for months, were found in the cellars: —"four hundred quarters of wheat; bacon, divers rooms full, containing hundreds of flitches; cheeses proportionable; with oatmeal, beef, pork, beer, divers cellars full, and very good."

After disposing of the eatables, the plunderers sold the household stuff; many cartloads of valuable furniture being sent off into the country, and disposed of to the peasantry and farmers by piecemeal. What plunder left untouched, fire consumed. Owing to the neglect of the besieged in quenching a fireball, a conflagration ensued; and now comes the greatest horror of this fearful scene. The soldiers had scarcely completed

their pillage—they had taken from the windows the last iron bar, they had ripped all the lead from every gutter—they were almost sated with blood and spoil, when the avenging flames drove them from their work. But not to them alone were the terrors of the scene limited. From the vaults of the house cries for quarter arose from voices in agony, and were heard until stifled by the smoke, and hushed for ever. "Our men," writes Mr. Peters, "could neither come to them, nor they to us." Three hundred prisoners were taken; a hundred bodies were discovered lying beneath the rubbish of the buildings.

In less than twenty hours, Basing House was but a heap of ruins! The fire raged fiercely, and with more than ordinary rapidity, leaving nothing but bare walls and chimneys. Well may Mr. Carlyle call this "a grim old scene!" although, blinded, as they of old were, by his wonderful idolatry of Cromwell, and by his hatred (let us not call it *zeal*) of Romanism, he passes over this *chef d'œuvre* of cruelty without a single comment of reprobation.

What, during all this time became of the Marquess of Winchester? Previous to the storming of the castle, he had, it appears, "been pressed by Mr. Peters to yield it before it came to storm;" upon which the hero broke out into a fury, and said, "if the king had no more ground in England than Basing House, he would adventure it as he did, and maintain it to the uttermost." But he was silenced, it seemed, by Mr.

Peters' arguments about the king and the parliament, and could only hope that "the king might have a day again."

The marquess was made prisoner. According to a rare tract, preserved amid much similar rubbish in the British Museum, he was found concealed in an oven, "numbering his beads very privately." Whether this be true or not, sure it is that the brave marquess was seen animating his garrison to the very last. But who could resist such numbers, such discipline, and determination? The reflections of Mr. Peters on this event are truly edifying: — "And thus the Lord was pleased, in a few hours, to show us what mortal all earthly glory grows upon, and how just and righteous the ways of God are, who takes sinners in their own snares, and lifteth up the hands of his despised people." In a similar spirit is the tract before alluded to commenced. It shows the taste and temper of the party then triumphant. It is entitled "A Looking-glass for the Popish Garrisons, held forth in the Life and Death of Basing House, 1645," and begins thus: — "What, my malignant friends! hang down your heads? Basing House taken without ceremony? 'Tis a miracle! What served the new-dubbed governor, Sir Robert Peak? What served the religious and mighty lord marquess? Would he invoke none of the saints? It is wonder, for the man was very serious at his devotions! no Pharisee, be assured!"

In this manner were the conscientious Roman Catholics taunted by various bigots and political

partisans. Cromwell lent himself to those low and slanderous attacks for his own purposes. One can never suppose that his intolerance was real: about as real, perhaps, as his religion.

The night before the storming of Basing he had passed chiefly in prayer. "He seldom," writes Mr. Peters, "fights without some text of Scripture to support him." On that occasion he "rested on that blessed word of God, the eighth verse of the 115th Psalm, 'They that made them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth them;' which, with some verses going before, was now accomplished." Thus armed with the most dangerous of all weapons, perverted religion, the general went forth to blast and to destroy. It is singular to find, in the nineteenth century, an approving testimony to such a deed, to such hypocrisy:—"Not unto us, O Lord; not unto us, but unto thy name the glory." "These words," says Mr. Carlyle, quoting the whole of that fine and sacred passage which is commenced by those expressions, "were in Oliver's heart that night!" Basing was the twentieth garrison that had been taken by the Parliamentarian army that summer; "and I believe," writes the odious Mr. Peters, "most of them the answers to the prayers and trophies of the faith of some of God's servants." The last closing act was to carry away from the ruins of Basing House the marquess's own colours, the motto of which, *Donec pax redeat terris*, was the very motto adopted by King

Charles on his coronation day. Mr. Peters received 200*l.* a year for his services, and his letter was read in all pulpits on the following Sunday by order of the Parliament.

It was the advice of Cromwell that Basing House should be suffered to fall wholly into decay. Whether he dreaded lest the associations of the old place should keep up the fuel of royalty in the hearts of the country people, or whether he thought that the enormities committed there had best be "interred with the bones" of those who lay mangled amid its ruins, or whether solely for the reasons which he stated to the Parliament, he judged it best to let it sink and fall away, we cannot judge. "I humbly offer to you," thus wrote he to the speaker Lenthall, "to have this place utterly slighted for these following reasons: it will ask eight hundred men to manage it; it is no position; the country is poor about it; the place exceedingly ruined by our batteries and mortar pieces, and by a fire which fell upon the place since our taking it." He, therefore, recommends a garrison being formed at Newbury, adding, "and I believe the gentlemen of Sussex and Hampshire will, with more cheerfulness, contribute to maintain a garrison on the frontier, than in their bowels, which will have less safety in it."

Accordingly, Basing House was to be carted away, and the following notice was put forth: "Whosoever will come for brick and stone shall freely have the same for his pains."

The brave defender of Basing House suffered a long

imprisonment in the Tower. Like Raleigh, he strove to lighten the pressure of his solitude by the indulgence of a literary taste, and composed several treatises, of which almost all were published after his release. Among these may be enumerated "The Gallery of Heroic Women," a translation from the French. He seems likewise to have watched with deep interest the falling fortunes of his master, and to have mourned, as for a brother, over every true man who laid down his life for the cause.

At last his enemies released him, and he retired to his estate of Englefield, where, in the year 1674, he expired, having lived to see the Restoration, and to be taught, with many others, that there was no gratitude in princes,—at least in princes of the house of Stuart.

The Marquess of Winchester married, in succession, three wives. His first was that Lady Jane Savage of whom Francis Howell, who taught her Spanish, said, "that Nature and the Graces exhausted all their treasures and skill in framing the exact model of female perfection;" and upon whom, in the seclusion of Christ's College, Cambridge, Milton composed his well-known epitaph.* She died in childbed of her

* Milton's beautiful but quaint epitaph must be familiar to our readers:—

"This rich marble doth inter
The honour'd wife of Winchester."

third son, at the early age of twenty-three.* His choice fell next upon the Lady Honora, daughter of Richard Burgh, Earl of St. Albans, and granddaughter of that great statesman, Sir Francis Walsingham; and, lastly, on her demise, he took to wife Isabella Howard, the daughter of Viscount Stafford, and a descendant of that Duke of Buckingham who, on account of his unfortunate connection with the blood-royal, is called, in Dryden's epitaph to Lord Winchester, Prince Edward Stafford.

The end of this brave nobleman was peaceful and holy. Let us see how it fared, in their latter days, with the principal actors in the tragedy of Basing.

Harrison, who, as Sir Walter Scott expresses it, "had followed the man Cromwell as close as the bull-dog follows his master," is known to have expired

" Summers three times eight save one
She had told; alas! too soon,
After so short time of breath,
To house with darkness and with death."

Thus runs her epitaph. The poet goes on to say:—

" Once had the early matrons run
To greet her with a lovely son."

But when with second hopes she goes, Atropos, and not Lucina, came to her childbirth:—

" But, whether by mischance or blame,
Atropos for Lucina came;
And, with remorseless cruelty,
Spoil'd at once both fruit and tree;
The hapless babe, before its birth,
Had burial, yet not laid in earth."

in all the agonies of retributive justice—retributive even upon earth. That he was a fanatic, half mad, a compound of avarice and hypocrisy, and of a blind enthusiasm, seems the only palliative; a fifth-monarchy man, ready at the bidding of his crafty and most sagacious leader to "pluck down from his high place the man whom they call Speaker, even as he lent a poor hand to pluck down the man whom they call King." It is impossible to dissever one's impressions of this misguided man from the incomparable portrait of him in "Woodstock." That portraiture appears, in the main, to have been founded on truth. The self-deceiving, yet remorseful culprit, startled by a dream, harrowed and appalled by a shadow—the successful plunderer, conscious of a worm within that never could die, whilst the remembrance of Robinson the player, whom he brutally slew at Basing, held its seat in his brain. These are all depicted by Walter Scott, upon authorities so scattered, that it were difficult to trace them. Scott may not be the truest historian, but he is the best historical painter who ever wrote in English.

The details of Cromwell's last years are verified, and afford copious proofs of the retribution which falls upon the heads of the merciless, when seemingly the most prosperous. In the words of Hume, "All his acts of policy were exhausted; and having so often, by fraud and false pretences, deceived every party, and almost every individual, he could no longer hope, by repeating the same professions, to meet with equal confidence and regard."

The consciousness of this truth, added to the intrusion of painful recollections, affected, there is no doubt, even the strong mind and animal spirits of Cromwell. His mother, who died in 1654, presented a sort of type of his own secret fears. She was never satisfied unless she heard of him twice a-day; she could not conquer her fears of his being assassinated. When the sound of a pistol-shot reached her ears, she exclaimed, "My son is shot!" What mattered it that these terrors came to her maternal and affrighted heart, sleeping or waking, beneath the rich canopies of Whitehall, where she witnessed her son's exaltation? They were such terrors as render the brightest scenes terrible, the richest luxuries loathsome.

That the Protector's fears were continual and well-founded, there is every proof. But in the illness and death of his daughter, Mrs. Claypole, was the bitterest of his trials. With what emotions he stood by her bedside, heard her reproaches for his wickedness, and strove vainly to believe them only the ravings of delirium, it is not easy to explain. Sinking under a wretched, consuming disease; haunted by perpetual alarm walking abroad; at home, amid the happy and the free, with a coat of mail underneath his clothes, a pair of loaded pistols at his belt; can it be doubted but that his career formed his own punishment,—that Basing House and his victims there were avenged?

What an existence! He watched every expression of countenance or language in others, "especially if they seemed joyful." He never came back from any

place the way he went; never travelled on the common road: he sped along as if pursued; he had many different locks and keys for his house and chambers; he seldom slept long in the same apartment, and never in any that had not several doors, and access to them by two or three back-stairs. Guards there were in all of them. What bed-rooms, what repose, what awakenings! Then it was his constant custom to change his residence, as if in new scenes to seek security, or to find that tranquillity which he was never more to know. His coach was known afar off by the galloping of the horses, and the guards crowding around it, within it, about it. At one time, he thought he was to be stabbed; at another time, poisoned. He redoubled his precautions, and those who waited on him, and who had formerly only swords at their sides, were now to wear pistols. What attendants! What repasts must they have been, waited on by creatures looking like armed bravoes! Reason began to totter; his hand shook when he wrote his signature; and there were times when the Protector ran round and about the house and into the garden like one distracted, or rode out with little company, shrinking from the converse of happier spirits than his own. The attempt of Lyndercombe to blow up Whitehall, by introducing combustibles into the chapel, taught him a new source of panic.

His appearance was still that of a man in health, and young for his age—fifty-nine. But the strength of that mighty frame, which had endured so many hard-

ships, was undermined by his previous course of life, and by his inward consciousness of its failure in promoting any permanent result to his country. Often was he heard to utter, with a sigh, these words,—"A burden too heavy for man!" referring to his labours of hand and head, his toils, his perils, his sorrows.

At last he was released. It is true that on his death-bed his spirits were buoyed up by a fanatical hope, and a distorted view of those holy truths upon which his life had been a libel. But what of that? Did that circumstance lessen the true miseries of his situation? It was in vain that long fasts and public prayers were held; in vain that his preachers declared, as a message from the Almighty, that he *should* recover; in vain that he himself had declared that from the same inscrutable source assurance had been given that he should be restored,—he died. Amid the howlings of a most destructive tempest passed away that spirit,—so glorious in many of its attributes, so mean, so base, in some. As he lay expiring, beneath his very windows trees were torn up in St. James's Park, ships were dashed against the coasts, and houses shattered to the ground,—

> "His last breath shakes our isle,
> And trees uncut fall for his funeral pile."

"He died," said Carrington, one of his satellites, "in a bed of baubles and on a pillow of caskets; and though the wreaths of the imperial laurel which environed his head did wither at the groans of his agony, it was only

to make place for a richer diadem which was prepared for him in Heaven." Such was the incense which now defiled his grave, as it had disgraced his career in life.

How different all this to the calm, holy, retired close of the good Marquess of Winchester's irreproachable existence! As he sowed, so did he reap.

CHAP. II.

LATHOM HOUSE, AND THE STANLEY FAMILY.

NEVER, perhaps, in England, were three domestic tragedies recorded in history, more painful to witness, more culpably and remorselessly enacted than those of Raglan, Basing, and Lathom.

Raglan, as its towers fell beneath the cannon of its foes, sank gallantly; but sank the legitimate victim, as it were, of its besiegers. Basing was crushed by the ferocity of revenge. Lathom was pitilessly assaulted whilst a mother and a wife was the chief of its garrison. The Somersets and the Paulets were great; but the feelings of the heart go along with the eventful narrative of the fate of Lathom. Poor Charlotte de la Tremouille! She had all the heroism of a French woman — the gentle virtues of an English wife and mother. I traced all that can be traced of her former home — of that home, that trust, of which she was so noble a guardian. I sorrowed for her as though all had happened yesterday, and then ceased my pilgrimage — my researches into old ruins. What higher heroism should I find than that displayed at Raglan, Basing, or Lathom? What more enduring fortitude?

I did not, indeed, enjoy my rambles in the north of England as I used to do my delicious evenings in Surrey or in Warwickshire — counties not unlike each other in the characteristics of landscape scenery. Warwickshire affords, indeed, a greater field for the antiquary; but Surrey is, of the two, the most varied and picturesque.

Lathom House, seated on a flat, boggy tract of land, and encompassed by a wall of two yards in thickness, was, in days of yore, as strong a domestic fortress as any armed host might invest, or general view in silent despair. On the wall above mentioned were raised nine towers, each of them planted with six pieces of ordnance, so mounted as to enfilade the country, and command every approach. A meat, twenty-four feet in breadth, and six in depth, surrounded this strong wall, between which and the grass was a row of palisades. From the centre of the house rose the Eagle Tower, surmounting the whole edifice, and connected, in the remembrance of the first owners of the heritage, with a tale of no common interest. On each side of the gate-house, at the entrance of the first court, frowned a strong tower, and in these, in time of siege, were stationed the best marksmen to harass the assailants. Thus stood Lathom House in the days of its first owners, the De Fitz-Henrys, or De Lathoms, when an incident is said to have occurred which, whether real or imaginary, seems to be worth describing.

Robert de Fitz-Henry, in the time of the Plantagenets, first adopted the surname of Lathom, from

his place of residence. His descendant, Sir Thomas Lathom, in the reign of Henry IV., enjoyed, with one alloy, that inheritance. No son promised to prolong the family honours, which were vested in the fair young Isabel, the heiress of all his broad lands, for whose favour knight and noble humbly proffered suit. One day, however, as Sir Thomas and his lady were walking in their park at Lathom, they were startled by loud cries; the place was solitary, but in no direction could they perceive any object. They soon, however, discovered that an eagle had its nest in that secluded spot, and on searching the eyrie, an infant, in rich swaddling-clothes, was found lying unharmed within its warm enclosure. Sir Thomas and Lady Lathom were not devoid of the superstitions of the day, and they had its pious charity too. The foundling was a boy; they adopted him, and, bestowing on him the name of Lathom, intended, it is said, to leave him heir to that estate. So far goes Tradition, but Reason steps in and dispels a portion of the romance. Sir Thomas, it appears, owned a base-born son, whom he was desirous to introduce into his lineage. He therefore had the infant conveyed to that spot, where, by an appointed "*chance*," if one may so speak, he and his lady walked just when the child was deposited, as if dropped from the eagle's nest in a safe, retired nook. Sir Thomas managed his part well. He pointed out to his dutiful and credulous wife the hand of a Higher Power in this event, and suggested the propriety of rearing the little

stranger as their heir. Lady Lathom (excellent Mrs. Shandy as she was) assented, and the child was brought up in all the odour of legitimacy. He was christened Oskately, and, at the usual age, knighted by Edward III. He assumed, too, for his crest an eagle flying from a child which it had left uninjured on the ground; "the fictions of romance" being, as old Collins observes, "sufficient for the whimsical distinctions" of heraldry! So far Isabel Lathom ran a narrow chance of being treated with injustice, but conscience interfered. Sir Thomas, before his death, acknowledged this son to be illegitimate; and, having endowed him with certain manors, bequeathed to Isabel the greater portion of his possessions, and amongst them Lathom House.

And now, how did the Stanley family profit by all this? Who were they? Whence came they? How comported they themselves in all the various stages of their greatness—in its dawn, in its zenith?

They flourished in Plantagenet times by the appellation of Audleigh, or Audley; the younger branch took the name of Stanleigh, or Stanley, from a moorland manor in Staffordshire, with which they were endowed; and one of these, a valiant follower of our most valiant Edward III., won by his gallantry in the lists the love of the heiress of the De Fitz-Henrys. Thus passed the wide domains of Lathom, with the Lordship of Man, into the possession of the illustrious house which still retains the former; but which conveyed the latter as a woman's dower to the house of Athole, that it

might be surrendered to the English Crown for the sum of 70,000*l.*

It were long to tell the gradual progress of this great family in honours, wealth, and fame. One interruption to it happened in the dark reign of Henry VII., when, despite his services at Bosworth Field, Sir William Stanley, not of Lathom, but of Holt Castle, Cheshire, lost his head on the scaffold for an idle speech. But it was, in truth, Sir William Stanley's great wealth that moved the jealousy of the hard-hearted, hard-headed monarch; for, says Lord Bacon, in his "Life of Henry VII.," Sir W. Stanley was the richest subject for value in the kingdom, "and for his revenue in land and fee, it was 3000*l.* a-year old rent, a very great matter in those times." However, he was courageous enough to believe, and I am apt to agree with him, that Perkin Warbeck was no impostor, a conclusion which Henry's very precautions seem to authorise; for ere he dispersed his band of spies throughout the kingdom, he caused them, says Lord Bacon, "to be solemnly *cursed* at Paul's Cross," in order to destroy any impression that these lofty-minded men were honoured with royal patronage.

Thomas Stanley, the first Earl of Derby, was a great man in great times, being the brother-in-law of Neville, Earl of Warwick, the Kingmaker, and the friend of Hastings. The loyal servant of Edward IV., he loved, for that monarch's sake, the fair and ill-starred boy his successor, whose fate is but dimly shadowed in the chronicles of that period. For his sake

(that of the fifth Edward) Stanley encountered the hatred of Richard III. The tragedy of Hastings' death is familiar to every one. Who, indeed, can forget it that remembers the Jane Shore of Miss O'Neill?—that powerful, passionate, and finished acting, which gave even to the irresolute Hastings' fate so deep an interest. The night before the death of Hastings, a dream visited the slumbers of his friend Stanley. He instantly informed Hastings of it, and begged him to fly from the scene of peril. But Hastings was impracticable. On the following day he was seized at the council-board of the Tower, and his head struck off: whilst Stanley with difficulty escaped the blow of a halbert aimed at him. The portentous dream was mournfully recalled, and the rash incredulity of Hastings censured; for "a boar" (I quote from the authority of Sir Thomas More) "with his tusks had" (Stanley's dream) "so razed them both that the blood ran about their shoulders." Stanley escaped with a short imprisonment, and married soon afterwards the justly celebrated Margaret Beaufort, the mother of Henry VII., and the foundress of Christ's and St. John's Colleges in the University of Cambridge; and it became Stanley's fate to pluck the crown from the brow of the usurper Richard, as he lay dead on the field of Bosworth, and to place it on the head of another usurper, namely, his own step-son, of pious and avaricious memory.

"Whereupon," writes Arthur Collins, with solemn emphasis, "he was advanced to the dignity of an earl,

by the title of Earl of Derby;" and he went on flourishing and accumulating dignities and wealth until the year 1504, when he was buried in Burscough Priory, adjacent to Lathom, having provided his tomb — the fashion in those days — with a perpetual remembrance to be prayed for.

Of this Sir Thomas there is still a memento at Knowsley in a portrait of a stern man in black, wearing a George. He left a goodly band of sons and daughters, of whom the former maintained the valiant character of the house.

I pass over a track of smaller stars, just here and there noting down some one orb of peculiar brilliancy. By way of instance, bear with me, reader, whilst I dwell for one brief page or so on the virtues of Edward, Earl of Derby, in Elizabeth's days, one of her privy council, and so chosen, notwithstanding that he had served her royal sister, — a rare instance of that Tudor penetration, which might well be called kingcraft, and which the Stuarts never possessed — the liberal selfishness of employing superior men, even though their talents had formerly been engaged in the service of a foe. This nobleman appears to have been a pattern of all the lordly virtues. "His greatness supported his goodness, and his goodness endeared his greatness. His great birth put him above all private respect, but his great soul never above public service. Indeed, he repaired, by ways thrifty yet noble, what his family had impaired by neglect."

It happened, unluckily for the Stanleys, that they

claimed kindred with the blood-royal. This was through the Nevilles, the Kingmaker's family, the Lady Eleanor Neville, or Alianore, having married the first Earl of Derby. Now Lady Eleanor was aunt to the Princess Anne, the consort of Richard III. Woe seemed to betide all of that race. Still their hearts were loyal, their fidelity incorrupt; but their fate was adverse. Ferdinando, fifth Earl of Derby, became the victim, though not the dupe, of certain political intrigues, the agent of which was one Hesket, a Jesuit, who tempted him, but in vain, to assume the title of king. The youth was wise, and rejected that counsel. He was, however, threatened by Hesket with sudden death if he disclosed the plot,—nay, even if he hesitated to give his compliance to it. The high spirit of the Stanleys rebelled at this menace. Ferdinando gave information, and Hesket was apprehended; but the young earl's doom was sealed from that moment.

He did not expire suddenly; his anguish was prolonged. Cruel pains tormented his numbered days, dark vomitings tortured the ill-fated peer. I abstain from sundry particularities given by Camden, as being more fit for a *post mortem* narrative than for a work like this. But I must needs recount, though with horror, that even after his dead body was rolled in searcloth, and wrapped in lead, "there ran such corrupt and stinking humours that no man could for a long time come near the place of his burial." These are old Camden's graphic words. Alas, poor Ferdinando! could not even pious affection shed its dews upon thy

hearse? And it was, after all, domestic treason that destroyed him; for his gentleman of the horse fled on his illness, and taking the earl's best horse—not content with the small feat of murdering him—was heard of no more.

An attempt was indeed made to prove that the earl died from the power of witchcraft; and a poor old woman, suspected of being a witch, and told to say the Lord's Prayer backwards, said it well; but being conjured in the name of Jesus that, if she had bewitched his honour, she should be able to say the same, she could never get over that clause, "Forgive us our trespasses,"—not even though it was repeated to her. Another poor old crone was found mumbling something in a corner of his honour's chamber, but what, God knoweth.

I pass over Ferdinando's immediate descendants, to hail the hero of the civil wars, the husband of the great defender of Lathom.

James, seventh earl of Derby, succeeded his father in 1642. How discriminative is the character of this nobleman, as given by Clarendon! "He was a man of great honour and clear courage; and all his defects and misfortunes proceeded from his having lived so little time among his equals, that he knew not which was the source of all the ill that befell him, having thereby drawn such prejudice against him from persons of inferior quality, who yet thought themselves too good to be contemned, that they pursued him to death."

His life was indeed a tragedy, yet it commenced in

high prosperity, and in the possession of that dearest of earthly blessings, a wife suitable in birth and character. Charlotte de la Tremouille, countess of Derby, was the daughter of Claude de la Tremouille, duc de Thouars, and of the Lady Charlotte, daughter of William, the first Prince of Orange, and of Charlotte de Bourbon his wife. Such was the descent of the justly celebrated countess; and she inherited the valour and judgment of her ancestor of the house of Orange.

At a very early age Charlotte de la Tremouille was united to the earl, and their union was truly propitious —mutual affection, congeniality of character, immense wealth, high reputation, were their blessings. To these were added in due time the felicity of children, both numerous and promising. "This marvellous picture," observes a modern writer, "of almost superhuman felicity, was doomed to be torn in pieces and scattered to the winds, by the accursed demon of faction and rebellion."

Beauty, as far as we can judge by the portrait of Vandyke, preserved in the family collection, was not the attribute of the illustrious Charlotte. She is represented by the matchless pencil as fat and clumsy, with ordinary features, except the eye, which, though at first sight it may appear sleepy, has a mine of thought buried beneath those overhanging lashes. Dressed according to the custom of the day, her hair in slender ringlets, a rich pearl in her ear, a single row round her neck, her dress of white satin, with full-hanging sleeves trimmed with several rows of large pearls, and fastened by a

brooch of rich gems, one looks in vain for that aristocratic bearing to which the descendant of a Bourbon seems entitled even by birth. There is, it must be confessed, more of the Dutch than of the French genealogy, expressed in the form and features of Charlotte de la Tremouille.

Her husband, on the other hand, bore that impress of high birth which it is scarcely possible to define, but which we feel by daily experience to exist. His brow was indeed low, and his long hair fell over it so as to shroud it; but his eyes are full of animation, the nose is fine and well formed, the mouth, surmounted by a slight moustache, is expressive of much sweetness. He is depicted, also by Vandyke, in a suit of armour, over which his long locks, scarcely curled, flow freely.

The earl had been little known until he appeared before the world in his military character. He passed the first years of his happy marriage in a princely privacy, superintending the various establishments of his father in the Isle of Man, and attending to the morals of a population who owned the Earls of Derby as their kings, and honoured them with a filial affection. His leisure from these momentous pursuits was spent in literature and philosophy; and among other productions, his "History of the Isle of Man," preserved in the "Desiderata Curiosa," is still valued. Not long, however, after his accession to the title, he was called by his duty to his sovereign into the field. The motto, "*Sans changer,*" anciently adopted by the elder branch of the Stanleys, was not falsified by this valiant man.

He was among the first of the nobility to raise forces for the king, the first to attend the summons of the monarch — never to desert that cause whilst life remained.

He was at Lathom when intelligence was brought to him that a design was formed to take the Isle of Man: he hastened thither. Throwing into his house at Lathom a few soldiers, and collecting such arms and ammunition as he could, he left it for ever.

His countess and her children remained behind; and scarcely had Lord Derby reached the Isle of Man, when she head that her house would be attacked — she feared, by a sudden assault. Her soldiers were raw, inexperienced countrymen, but they were faithful; and among her garrison there was a Captain Farmer, a veteran officer, trained to war in that famous school, the Low Countries.

Lady Derby having discerned his merit, made him major of the house; and placed under his command six captains, chosen from among the gentlemen of her household. Under these, again, were the common soldiers listed, trained by them and instructed. These preparations were skilfully concealed, and such was the fidelity of her household, that when the enemy approached they had no idea of any other forces than her own servants being within the house.

On the 28th of February, 1644, Sir Thomas Fairfax, willing, perhaps, to spare the unfortunate countess the horrors of a siege, desired a conference. She consented. He was received in the great hall of Lathom. As he

entered the first court, the wary general was struck by the appearance of what seemed a considerable force. Not only the main guard occupied the first court, but men were ranged in open sight, on the tops of the walls, and on the towers, in such a manner as to appear more numerous than they really were.

This was done by the advice of Captain Farmer, not only to prevent a surprise, but to intimidate the enemy by the appearance of strength, for the army which besieged Lathom amounted to 4000 men. Sir Thomas, and a gentleman of quality who accompanied him, were received with a lofty courtesy. But when he offered terms, the lady required a month's delay to consider of them. "Not a day's," was the reply; and Fairfax departed.

He was still uncertain whether to commence a regular siege, or to attempt to take the place by storm; but he was deceived by a mean negotiation between one of his own officers and the chaplain of the house, into the belief that the countess had no store of provisions. He, therefore, decided on a siege: for fourteen days hostilities were delayed — then, supposing that her supplies were exhausted, he summoned the countess to surrender. The answer, sent by a trumpeter, was worthy of the heroine who penned it. It was this: "That, as she had not lost her regard for the Church of England, nor her allegiance to her prince, nor her faith to her lord, she could not, therefore, as yet, give up the house; that they must never hope to gain it till she had either lost all of these, or her life, in

defence of them." And this reply came after a torturing continuance of suspense of fourteen days.

The siege now began in earnest, and it continued without let or intermission during a space of three months. Many were the gallant feats of arms which distinguished the sorties made by the garrison; and well was the spirit of the men sustained by the heroic courage of their mistress. She feared neither shot nor shell. More than once a cannon-ball passed through the chamber, and much was she annoyed by the fire of a mortar — a new engine of war in those days — at least to the troops which held Lathom House. But she made light of every peril which threatened her own person, and taught her people, by the example which she set, to prefer death to dishonour. These things have occurred elsewhere, therefore we need not dwell upon them. But possibly the following little anecdote may interest, though that too, might be paralleled, had we leisure, at this moment, to look about for its fac-simile.

It happened, during the progress of the siege, that a dog belonging to some gentleman in the house, proved himself a friend to man in a very remarkable manner. The chaplain, who managed all correspondence carried on by the garrison with their friends without, by means of ciphers, was in great want of some means of conveying his despatches out of the house, surrounded on every side, as it was, by enemies; till observing that a dog was in the habit of going to and fro from his master in the house to his mistress, who lived a short distance

from it, he determined to make the animal his messenger. Having tied his despatch, tightly rolled, by a thin string, to the neck of the animal, he managed to convey intelligence of it to the gentlewoman, wife of the dog's master, and directed her to forward all she received, as she best could, to his majesty. She did so; and having kept the trusty creature by her for a day or so without food, she then turned him out of doors, and he invariably returned to his master in Lathom House. By this means the poor besieged inhabitants sent intelligence of their condition to the king and his friends, and received in their turn news back from them. For many months the faithful animal discharged this important office, bringing encouragement to the garrison, enabling them to know on what they might depend; so that, having accurate information of the state of the king's affairs, they were never excited by false hope, nor too much cast down by the disappointment of ill-founded expectations. But the fate of the faithful dog was melancholy. One day, when returning to the house, laden with tidings as usual, an idle soldier discharged his loaded musket at the poor creature. The dog, true to his trust, managed to drag himself near the gate with his precious cargo, and then laid himself down and died. His death deprived the garrison of a most sure and trusty friend, and of the greatest comfort and solace of which their condition was susceptible—the means of communication with the outer world.

During three months the contest was protracted, but Charlotte de la Tremouille prevailed. The Parlia-

mentary general, on the 27th of May, withdrew his forces to Bolton. Four thousand men had been planted before the walls of Lathom, two thousand alone marched away, such had been the slaughter; and the Eagle tower still rose imperious in its untouched strength, the banner of the Stanleys waving proudly over it. A short interval of stillness was there in the halls of Lathom, and a brief season of repose to the noble Charlotte, before another host appeared before the gates. No longer were the cropped locks and demure faces of the Parliamentarians there. No, a gallant band, headed by one of the handsomest cavaliers of his time, came riding gaily and triumphantly into its courts; and the voice of Prince Rupert, in half-foreign accents, was heard saluting the lady of Lathom House.

Rupert was, at this period, in the full perfection of his youth, being twenty-five years of age. His portrait, and that of his less distinguished brother, Prince Maurice, afford specimens of the noblest style of manly beauty. As you gaze upon them, in the hall of Warwick Castle, limned by Vandyke, you feel how much *such* persons, such countenances, a bearing so aristocratic, yet so free, must have influenced the affections even of the rudest soldiery. Perhaps of the two, the handsomer is Maurice; but his is the more subdued countenance—the more effeminate expression, if such a term can be applied to either brother; in Rupert, the hero alone appears. And heroic were those boyish

words of his, uttered when hunting in some English park in 1633:—

"Ah! I wish I could break my neck, for then I should leave my bones in England."

The prince, enchanted with the defence of Lathom, gave orders, in the name of the king, for bastions and counterscarps to be added to its fortifications. But, alas! the king did not follow out this plan: ungraciously, if not ungratefully he ordered it to be surrendered to the Parliamentary army. This was in December, 1645. The work of demolition was very soon begun, very soon completed; and a heavy fine, of course, was laid upon the mansion. The heroic countess repaired to the Isle of Man, where she rejoined her lord. For several years they lived there, in their wonted princely grandeur; but the storm lowered, and the brave earl was its next exemplary victim. Long might his widow mourn one who united to valour and disinterestedness — rare accomplishments! — learning and prudence. From her castle in the Isle of Man she watched his brief but glorious career, rejoiced over his noble defence of Wigan, and wept when she heard that in the fatal fight of Worcester he had fallen into the enemy's hands; for well she knew that there would be no mercy shown him. Two years previously he had irritated Cromwell (who had offered him terms to surrender the Isle of Man,) by a noble reply. One extract from that fearless letter let me give, by way of *pendant* to the epistles of the defender of Ragland:—

"I scorn your proffers, I disdain your favours, I abhor your treasons; and am so far from surrendering this island to your advantage, that I will keep it to the utmost of my power to your destruction.

"Take this final answer, and forbear any further solicitations; for if you trouble me with any more messages on this occasion, I will burn the papers and hang the bearers."

His fate was, therefore, sealed; and it was to be accomplished not far from his home—at Bolton, in Lancashire. He died gallantly, piously, like a Cavalier. Can one say more? When flattered with hopes of life he listened patiently, but said,—

"I was resolved not to be deceived with the vain hopes of this fleeting world."

When desired, according to the custom of the day, to find a "friend" to do the last office of the law, he replied,—

"Nay, sir, if those men that would have my head will not find one to cut it off, let it stand where it is. I thank God my life has not been so bad that I should be instrumental to deprive myself of it, though he has been so merciful to me as to deprive me of the worst terrors of death."

He had the consolation of seeing around him three of his children; but his wife, and one loved daughter, the Lady Mary, were in the Isle of Man. Well was it for that noble, tender heart, that it prognosticated not their future destiny.

There is something ominous in the words which he addressed to a faithful attendant on the morning of his execution:—

"Here, Bagaley, deliver these letters to my dear wife and sweet children. I have instructed you in all things for your journey. But as to that sad part of it (as to them) I can say nothing: silence, and your own looks will best tell your message. The great God of Heaven strengthen you, and prosper and comfort them in this their great affliction!"

Perhaps the most affecting incident of Lord Derby's last hours was the appearance of four condemned gentlemen, who, at his request, were permitted to come forth from their dungeons to bid him farewell, and they did so;—with what emotions, it requires no pen to describe.

Lord Derby went to the scaffold amid the tears of the people. His daughters accompanied him half the way; then the earl, alighting from his horse, knelt down by the coach in which Lady Catherine and Lady Amelia formed a part of the procession, and took a solemn leave of them. His voice, ere he bade them farewell, was lifted up in prayer. "This," says the narrator, "was the saddest hour I ever saw;" and well might it be so.

Like other brave men, the soldier who had faced death in the field had feared lest on the scaffold he might shrink from it. At the last hour this apprehension was removed.

"I bless God for it, who has put this comfort and courage into my soul, that I can as willingly now lay down my head on the block, as ever I did upon a pillow."

The night before he had eaten a competent meal, saying he would imitate his Saviour—his supper should be his last act in this world. Then he bestowed on his son, Lord Strange, his Order, bidding him return it to his sovereign, King Charles II., saying that he sent it, in all humility and gratitude, as he received it,—spotless, and free from any stain from his ancestors. For what an unworthy object was this pure blood shed! Such was the love entertained for him, that the true-hearted common people refused to strike even a nail into his scaffold, saying, "that since the wars they had had many and great losses, but none like this, it being the greatest that had ever befallen them."

Amidst the fears of a rescue the Earl of Derby was conveyed to his doom. His parting address shows the estimation in which he was held in the place of his execution:—

"I come, and am content to die in this town, where I endeavoured to come the last time I was in Lancashire, as to a place where I persuaded myself to be welcome, in regard that the people thereof have reason to be satisfied in my love and affection to them, and now they understand that sufficiently."

When all was ready, and he was about to lay his head upon the block, he looked towards the church, and, causing the block to be turned that way, said,—

"I will look towards the sanctuary which is above for ever."

Then bowing himself down, he said,—

"The Lord bless my wife and children: the Lord bless us all."

A fearful scene ensued. The earl laid his head upon the block, yet the executioner forbore to strike; so the doomed man rose up, and in an agony of tortured feeling exclaimed,—

"What have I done that I die not? Why do you not finish your work?"

The appeal was answered by the fatal blow, given amid a deep silence, broken only by sighs and sobs; and thus fell one of the many brave spirits of that age. His death has been justly styled one of the worst acts of the Parliament, a "murder in cold blood." To quote from Clarendon once more:—

"The King's army was no sooner defeated at Worcester, but the Parliament renewed their old method of murdering in cold blood, and sent a commission to erect a high court of justice to persons of ordinary quality, many not being gentlemen, and all notoriously his enemies, to try the Earl of Derby for his treason and rebellion; which they easily found him guilty of, and put him to death in a town of their own."

After the execution of the earl, a slip of paper was thrown into his coffin, containing these lines:—

"Wit, bounty, courage, three in one, lie dead;
A Stanley's hand, Vere's heart, and Cecil's head."

Such was the tribute, at once to the valour of the race and the individual virtues of the man.

Meantime, where was his countess? How bore she her complicated sorrows? Did her spirits sink beneath these manifold misfortunes, or was Charlotte de la Tre-

mouille still undaunted?—still a worthy descendant of the great house of Nassau?

She was still quartered in the Isle of Man. When the earl returned into Lancashire, he left his wife in charge of his Manx territory, appointing Sir Thomas Armstrong governor under her. On the very night of the Earl of Derby's death, such was the remorseless cruelty of his foes, a summons was despatched to Charlotte de la Tremouille to surrender the island. It must have reached her at the same time that a letter from her husband, full of pathos, and of the sublimity which comes of strong feeling, had been delivered into her hands. In the narrative which ensues, we touch upon the ground over which Scott has passed, embellishing as he went by his flights of fancy the details of history, yet not departing widely, as is often stated, from that foundation. The character of Christian, for instance, so ably described in "Peveril of the Peak," is marvellously like its original.

Christian was a creature of the Earl of Derby's bounty, educated at his cost, known to him from his infancy. Lord Derby, above all suspicion himself, had trusted this man; he had given him the charge of his lady and children—a sacred trust in a dying man; he had appointed him captain over the foot-guards in the island. So great was his supposed fidelity, such claims were there on his gratitude, that when Sir Thomas Armstrong received the summons to surrender, he refused, trusting in the "loyalty" (such was the word used by the Manx men to the Earls of Derby) of that

man. The characteristics of these islands (originally a migration from the Hebrides) seems, indeed, before the contamination of their smoky neighbour, Liverpool, reached their unfrequented shores, greatly to have resembled those of the Highlanders of Scotland. Perfidy was unknown amongst them, until—why is it, that in this life there is always an *until?*—until parliamentarian bribes corrupted them; and demons, in the forms of Rigby, Birch, and, of a still more hideous monster, Bradshaw, came to the place to tamper with Christian.

Upon hearing of the summons to surrender, the countess, gathering her children around her, retreated to Peele, or Pile, Castle, a fort defended by a strong tower, and by a platform, on which cannon were mounted. Hither Sir Thomas Armstrong accompanied her. Secure they believed themselves to be, for they believed that Christian, who ruled over their forces, was true. But he to whom the earl had given the charge of his helpless widow and orphans betrayed them to Duckenfield and Birch!—they were seized in the night, and the countess was then told that the island had been surrendered by Christian on certain articles. She asked to see these conditions; for, in the midst of her fears, her presence of mind did not forsake her. She found that the smaller islands were not included; she remembered that Peele Castle was separated from the main land, and begged to go there, in hopes of secretly escaping to the Continent. This was refused; she was cast into prison, and kept there,

reduced to the lowest penury, her children starving round her, whilst General Fairfax enjoyed her revenues, and revelled in his greatness as Lord of Man. This happened in the year 1651. Well might she exclaim, "How long shall the Lord suffer these things?" But she murmured not, and looked for restitution even in this life, when the rightful heir to the crown should again sit upon the throne. She might remember that, save one empty honour, her late lord had owed nothing to the bounty of Charles II. All the obligations were on the king's side; the earl's loyalty had not one dash of self-interest to sully its brightness. In her poverty, therefore, in the gloom of her prison, she hoped. She buoyed herself up, too, not only with dreams of compensation for the ruinous losses which her young son's estate had incurred, but with the assurance of justice on his father's judges, for the voice of the nation cried out against them. But she knew not Charles Stuart; she knew not the cold, selfish heart, concealed beneath the mask of Frankness; she knew not the hollow faith, varnished over by courtesy. Her suit for restitution failed. "Then," writes the historian of the Stanleys, "her great heart overwhelmed with grief and endless sorrow, burst in pieces." She died at Knowsley.

Such was the fate of this true heroine. Whilst the duties of home alone required her care, she shone in privacy, pure, yet glistening, like the dew-drop on the violet's leaf. When extremity changed her path, she came forth, bracing up her energies to action, and resolved that the *honour* of her house, that tenacious

bond to generous deeds, should not be lost so long as a woman's head could contrive means to preserve it, or a woman's influence sway the hands of others.

Her son Charles, eighth earl of Derby, succeeding to a sad inheritance of sorrow, found everything in confusion. Lathom was demolished, and its owner, the young earl, suffered imprisonment for the royal cause; for in 1659, on Sir George Booth's rising in Cheshire, he appeared at the head of a band of Lancashire gentlemen, but, being defeated, was taken in the garb of a serving-man. He found half his estates sequestered and sold, Lathom House destroyed, and his affairs in the utmost confusion; scarcely enough, in short, remained to support the dignity of his rank; so that he possessed no estate in Lancashire, Cheshire, Westmoreland, Warwickshire, and Yorkshire, but that near it he beheld some lands which once were his own, now passed away to others. He petitioned Parliament for redress, and a bill, restoring to him his property, was prepared; but, according to some accounts, it was rejected by the king; according to others, it never went into a third reading. In either case Charles was to blame, for his known wishes would have insured justice. On the front of Knowsley House an inscription to this effect was placed in a subsequent reign:—

"James, Earl of Derby, Lord of Man and the Isles, grandson of James Earl of Derby, by Charlotte de la Tremouille, daughter of Cloud de la Tremouille, who was beheaded at Bolton, the 15th October, 1651, for strenuously adhering to King Charles II., who refused a bill, unanimously passed by both houses of parlia-

ment, for restoring to the family the estates which he had lost by his loyalty to him."

Mr. Pennant has thought proper to call this a "calumniating inscription," but the historian of the Stanleys corroborates the fact; and one can only regret that the monarch was beyond the power of public opinion, beyond the influence of shame (if he ever owned it), when this reproach was inscribed.

Of the other branches of the Stanley family, some brief notice is required. The Lady Amelia Sophia was married to John Murray, Marquess of Atholl; she was the ancestress of Lord George Murray, who, of all that family, the most resembled the Stanleys, being impetuous, brave, haughty, faithful, and sagacious. The Isle of Man was the portion of Lady Amelia, and passed, therefore, into the Atholl family, by whom it was sold to the Government.

One word to the theme with which I set out; one brief, affectionate farewell to Lathom. William, ninth Earl of Derby, sought to restore it after the dilapidation of time and avarice. He erected a stately front, intending to rebuild the house in the same style, but did not live to finish his design. After his death it became the portion of his daughter, Lady Henrietta Ashburnham, who sold it to Henry Furness, Esq. In 1724, it was purchased by Sir Thomas Boodle, and is now in the possession of Edward Wilbraham Boodle, Esq.

Sir Thomas Boodle built the present house, from a design of Leoni's, of the views of which the scientific

may judge by consulting the fourth volume of the *Vitruvius Britannicus*. It is a fine house, doubtless, but it is not *our* Lathom House. It is not the Lathom House of the benevolent Sir Thomas, from whom its name was originally derived. It is not the Lathom House of his lovely daughter, the pride of her county, Isabel. It is not the Lathom House of the foundling, Oskately. It is subservient no longer to the bird and bantling. The motto, "*Sans changer*" is entirely contradicted by its modern splendours. It is not even the Lathom House rife with the dark recollection of the murdered Ferdinando, or glorious with the memory of the never-to-be-forgotten Charlotte de la Tremouille. In the park, however, is a chapel, founded in the fifteenth century, with some alms-houses adjoining, still maintained with its almoner; and hither Isabel may have sauntered, or Oskately have heard there from gossiping talk the tale of his origin; and the fate of Ferdinando have been the winter evening's theme over a log fire.

CHAP. III.

COLERIDGE.—SIR JAMES HALL.—LESLIE.—MACKINTOSH. —BLANCO WHITE.

It is many years ago since I hastily noted down, rather with the idea of recording the impressions of fading memory, than with any more serious purpose, my recollections of those remarkable persons with whom accident had brought me into acquaintance. With the same peculiarity that caused me to take a delight in ruined castles and old houses, I found a sort of melancholy satisfaction in dwelling upon the characteristics of those who were *not*: in describing, to the best of my power, the intellect, the living attributes of which are for ever obscured from our view, and lingering over the qualities of heart as well as of mind, which I can only the more fondly cherish since they are lost now to me and to others for ever.

"Every one's recollections are of some value," said a friend who took up a page or two; "why not finish your recollections? you have had singular opportunities." I took the advice: and here write down simply what I feel about those whose names occur here. Scarcely any two minds receive the same im-

pressions from the same objects: mine, therefore, may not give satisfaction to all who believe themselves to be judges upon the subject.

My earliest recollections are of Coleridge, taking me upon his knee, and telling me with a plaintive voice and with an emphasis that I can never forget, the story of Mary of Buttermere, then a recent subject of popular discourse. His pallid face, his long black hair, which was suffered, with the characteristic affectation of Coleridge's younger days, to fall about his neck,—the appealing tones of his voice—the earnest gaze which he fastened upon my puzzled countenance, and the simple eloquence with which he told the story, are still present with me. Tears ran down his cheeks—for his were feelings that could be conjured up instantaneously. This little scene was enacted before a large circle of admiring and sympathetic young women,—my elder sisters being amongst the most approving, and whilst philosophers and literati looked on.

The poet visited the house at which I was staying: Coleridge was in the capacity of travelling companion to one of the most amiable and accomplished of men, a son of the great Wedgewood: an invalid, of a mind equal in delicacy to his drooping and sensitive frame. Mr. Wedgewood was on his road to Naples, where he died of consumption, enjoying on his death-bed the reflection that he had been the first to discern the talents of Davy, whom he had encountered culling plants from the rocks near Penzance, and whom he introduced to Dr. Beddoes. He might also consider that he had, by

his liberality, smoothed the rugged path of Coleridge's mid-way career; for the poet was at that time in great necessity.

The next occasion on which I beheld Coleridge was, when lecturing to a fashionable audience at the Royal Institution. He came unprepared to lecture. The subject was a literary one, and the poet had either forgotten to write, or left what he had written at home. His locks were now trimmed, and a conscious importance gleamed in his eloquent eyes, as he turned them towards the fair and noble heads which bent down to receive his apology. Every whisper (and there were some hundreds of ladies present) was hushed, and the poet began. I remember there was a stateliness in his language, and the measured tones did not fall so pleasantly upon my ear as the half-whispered accents in which "Mary of Buttermere" was described to my childish understanding. "He must acknowledge," he said, "his error—the lecture was *not;* but the assembly before him must recollect, that the Muses would not have been old maids, except for want of a dowry." The witticism was received with as much applause as a refined audience could decorously manifest, and the harangue proceeded. I began to think, as Coleridge went on, that the lecture had been left at home on purpose; he was *so* eloquent — there was such a combination of wit and poetry in his similes — such fancy, such a finish in his illustrations: yet, as we walked home after the lecture, I remember that we could not call to mind any real instruction, distinct impression, or

new fact imparted to us by the great theorist. It was all fancy, flourish, sentiment, that we had heard.

Sir James Hall, the father of the now noted Captain Basil Hall, was the next object of my early reminiscences. He was a very peculiar being—shrewd, reflective, and scientific. He came to visit us, in order to watch the chemical processes in a manufactory near to us. This was his object: his recreation was tormenting and frightening us poor children, by making faces behind our chairs, then touching us to call our attention; swinging us so high that our little feet touched the tree tops, and we screamed with terror; springing upon us from behind a holly-bush, or pushing us down upon half-broken ice, then rescuing us with a rude kindness. His mornings were given to deep scientific pursuits, grave thoughts, elaborate researches; his evenings (how like all Scotsmen) to jigs, and practical jokes: yet he was simple and gentle as the children whom he loved, and who loved him; and we heard of his departure, protracted week after week, with sorrow.

Sir James was succeeded in our circle of friends by the far-famed Leslie, that prince of philosophic coxcombs; who, with round shining face, and sleek hair, descended from his travelling-carriage to step, smirking and ogling, into our well-filled drawing-room. Fat, coarse, and vain, the great precursor of Davy elicited nothing but suppressed laughter from the fair circle of merry girls whom he strove to fascinate. He was profound—far more profound, we were told, than our

friend Sir James Hall: but he was a self-worshipper, the idol of an Edinburgh coterie, whose praises rang in his ears as he descended to our southern sphere. A strange compound of love and chemistry, it was well for Leslie that he lived not in these degenerate days, when his splendid attainments would not have rescued his absurdities from periodical ridicule, his person from caricaturists, nor his society from being pronounced an infliction.

Years passed away; and when, by matured perceptions and improved intellect, I was enabled to appreciate such a privilege, I had the happiness of knowing Mackintosh.

Our dawning acquaintance was heightened into a something less close than friendship, more intimate than ordinary acquaintance, by an illness with which I was afflicted. It resembled, at first, the fatal disease of which a favourite daughter had recently died, and the sensitive feelings of the most amiable of men were touched by the detail of symptoms which recalled the anguish which he had endured. He called almost daily to inquire after my health, and supplied me with books, admirably chosen for the diversion of an invalid, whose weakened mind could not grasp what was abstruse, yet whose nerves might not sustain the impression of exciting fiction. Amongst other books, he thus introduced me to Scott's "Lives of the Novelists," that charming little work, which Mackintosh warmly applauded; and no one could more delicately and critically enter into those masterly estimates of the merits

of each novelist, with which Scott has enriched this work. "I love fiction so much," said Sir James to me one day, "that there is a sort of rivalship between me and C——s G——t which can get hold first of the last new novel."

During my recovery from the illness referred to, I used to sit at a window, and watch the slow steps of Sir James as he paced to and fro the walks of a garden near. Drooping as his figure now was—for he was approaching his sixtieth year—there was yet something noble in that tall, athletic form, reared among the hills of Invernesshire, but recently shaken in its strength by the enfeebling latitudes of India. Calm, but pensive, was the expression of Sir James's countenance at that period. All fiery passions were in him suppressed by the truest philosophy, the most perfect and practical benevolence. But disappointment, perhaps, that his resplendent talents had long spent their force in remote and thankless exertions, the indifference of some political and early friends, the unmerited estrangement of others, the conviction that his own opinions, carefully weighed, and slowly brought to maturity, were far too moderate for the rising faction, far too liberal for that whose sun was setting, must have brought painful and anxious thoughts to the heart of one too disinterested to grieve for his own privations, but naturally desirous of employing those powers, of which he could not but be conscious.

Such reflections may have accounted for the sadness, not to call it gloom, which was always dispelled from

the countenance of Mackintosh when a friend, or even acquaintance approached; for he really loved society, nay, somewhat depended on it; not shutting up his thoughts and feelings from the few, and disburdening them solely on the public, but imparting freely, easily, not voluminously and ponderously, the workings of his stored and reflective mind. His prodigious memory was so chastised by judgment, as never to overpower. He needed not the foil of ordinary minds to set off his mental superiority. Among the select of France and England, by the side of Hallam and Sismondi, he surpassed all other minds in the extent of his knowledge and freshness of ideas. With Cuvier and Herschel, the accomplished philosopher, great in science almost as in literature, shone forth — in conversational tact, and in that quiet repartee, which, uttered by his lips, was pointed, but never caustic, he could cope with Jeffrey.

I saw him in his decline, but a few weeks before he was gathered to the tomb. It was after the slight, but fatal accident that brought into play lurking mischief in his constitution, had occurred, that I took a last farewell of the historian and philosopher, whose works a more thinking age is beginning fully to comprehend and to value. His face was then blanched almost to an unearthly hue; and the first conviction that I felt on looking at my revered friend was, that his shattered frame could sustain no fresh attack of disease. Alas! the axe was then laid to the root of the tree. I knew it not; but though he scarcely partook of any food, save the sparest and lightest, I

trusted that he was convalescent. Never did I see him more cheerful. An early friend of his family, a Scottish lady of condition, upwards of eighty, sat at his hospitable board, and recalled to him the days of Adam Smith, whom Sir James Mackintosh just remembered, and spoke of the childhood of Harry Brougham, Frank Horner, and James Mackintosh, as if they were but young men still, and she — already stepping into the grave, in her prime: — a happy illusion, with which let none seek to interfere.

In Hampstead churchyard, his grave only marked by a plain stone, no inscription save that of his name and age, lie the remains of this truly great, and truly good man. They repose by the side of the daughter whose death has been referred to; and near to a yew tree, against which, as the clergyman who read the Funeral Service over that daughter informed me, Sir James Mackintosh leaned, during the solemn rites, in an agony of grief; often have I stood by it since, and recalled those lines of Cowper (that poet whose genius, and whose misfortunes ever met with deep sympathy from Mackintosh): —

> "Could one wish bring thee, would I wish thee here?
> I dare not trust my heart, — the dear delight
> Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might:
> But, no; what we here call our life is such,
> So little to be loved, and *thou* so much,
> That I should ill requite thee to restrain
> Thy unbound spirit into bonds again."

Who now remembers the man about whom all England

was at one time talking, Blanco White? What a treasure he would be to some parties, could he arise from his grave, and lay bare again the secrets of the Brotherhood to which he belonged. I never liked him: young and unused as I was in the world, and before my initiation even into an university world, I always distrusted that meek, smooth face — that bland manner, caustic nevertheless on some points. He was then a red-hot, fiery, zealous Protestant — the character is *not* Christian, assert it who may. It may be useful to a party, it may be sincere — I believe it; but the man who brings the bitterness of party spirit to bear upon the holiest, the mildest, the purest of themes, may be a polemic but he cannot be a practical Christian.

Many people doubted Blanco White's sincerity; I did not — for the time. He was a man, to judge by his writings, more than from any personal knowledge of him, who took up any one side of a question with an earnestness that had much of the Jesuit in it; for it was varnished over with the most exquisite air of moderation. He died an Unitarian—most people were surprised — *I* was not. I am never surprised at the violent going from the South Pole to the North, their consistency is alone a matter of wonder.

I never could look at Blanco White without recalling the former monk to my mind's eye, and fancying him singing motets and requiems with his brethren. It was a monk-like face — long, very long, white, smooth; there was an air of subdued determination,

if one may use such a word—he looked like a man who had lived by rule, as if the passions had been subjected to discipline. I could not help shaping out the tonsure on his head, and figuring to myself a cowl on his shoulders, or fancying him in a long, black, serge robe.

CHAP. IV.

MRS. SERRES. — CHARLES MILLS. — L. E. L.

I WONDER whether any one ever enjoyed the singular fortune which I had, of seeing Mrs. Olivia Serres in respectable society—of hearing that queen-like looking creature talk naturally, and sanely; and of having the especial honour of being introduced to her two daughters, Britannia and Cordelia.

Mrs. Serres was not then either the Princess Olivia or the Princess of Poland, but the undoubted wife of Mr. Serres, landscape painter by appointment to the royal family. She was very handsome — at least, I thought her so; rouged, tall, fat, audacious. There was a mystery made by the family at whose house we met her, touching her birth—they believed in it, good creatures — an aged bookseller and his deaf wife; the most trusting, because the most honest and benevolent people in the world.

I remember Mrs. Serres telling us the story of her uncle, Dr. Wilmot's house, near Coventry, being broken into; and of her interesting one of the robbers by her courage and beauty, and his sparing her some favourite trinket, and her afterwards appearing against him at the Warwick assizes, where — and I can quite believe it — she excited the admiration of every one by her unparalleled replies during a severe cross-examination.

She told the story well. She had patient and admiring listeners; and I remember—I was not twelve—being somewhat awed by the names her daughters had: I felt honoured by catching Britannia at blind-man's buff, and could hardly believe that it was really Cordelia who laughed so loud at hunt the slipper. I suppose royalty was in her head when these names were bestowed. At that time, however, Mrs. Serres depended a good deal upon the lavish bounty of a half-witted gentleman, who believed firmly in her claims, and worshipped her beauty. Some years afterwards, I heard of her greeting the late Duke of York out of her window, as "Cousin Frederick." This was quite consistent with her effrontery in private life.

Coeval with my acquaintance with him, and between the period of boyhood and of college, was my more matured friendship with Charles Mills. Charles Mills! I think I hear those of my grandchildren who may, at some future time, pick up this retrospect, among old bills, or old letters, ask, "Who *was* Charles Mills?" I answer, "Many a worse man, many a writer with one-third of his knowledge, has lived, and does live, whilst *he* is chiefly to be found in a dusty back room, (that is, his remains,) at Messrs. Longmans', Paternoster Row.

He was one of that race who may scan what this hand now writes, (having done, thank Heaven! for the present with these papers from Lincoln's Inn)—of a race quite gone by, clean expunged from society—

a laborious gentleman writer—a man of independent circumstances, not rich, who chose, from the love of letters, and the desire of fame, to dedicate himself to the fabrication of long historical works, the very subjects of which would drive our present authors to despair. "History of Mohammedanism," "History of the Crusades," "History of Chivalry," admirable, neglected works, written in a too ambitious style, with the ghost of Gibbon always in the writer's view, presiding over his library table, but excellent, nevertheless,—and, my daughters, or grand-daughters, or great-grand-daughters, they were *pure!* The subjects were delicately handled: for their writer had an infinite sense of what was seemly, and was a Christian writer.

He was, indeed, a sort of knight-errant in his notions of ladies, of whom he knew little enough, though he loved their society. I well remember the deference of his manner to them—how seldom he ventured to raise his fine, dark, beaming eyes to gaze on any young beauty. Yet, he was, though when I knew him inclining to the old bachelor, by no means unsusceptible. But he lived in an ideal world. He lived with Gray, Pope, Addison. His intimate associates were Warton and Thomson; the companions of his lighter hours, Lady Mary Wortley, and Swift, or perhaps, Mrs. Centlivre, or Mrs. Oldfield,—no scandal! I mean to say, he spoke in their language, he almost thought their thoughts. He was remarkably conversant with dramatic literature, and I doubt not, was one of those who understood every point of a good actor, from John Kemble

down to Blanchard. His quotations, in society, were infinite — his manner gentle, but not devoid of pedantry. Pedantry! What an antiquated characteristic! Like the stage-coaches, it will soon be a mark of age to remember that such a failing was ever known. With it, there has passed away the race of close readers — the habit of accuracy — the love and the knowledge of the old writers.

I was on the top of a Cambridge coach when I passed, one day, the lodgings where my poor friend Mills lived. I saw him at the window, his face looked pale, I thought — he was standing, too, unemployed. A faint smile passed across his face as he saw me. I called to the guard, and jumped off, carrying my carpet bag with me. Absolutely the dear fellow came down to the door to meet me. I never saw a frame more shattered. He had been ill, broken a blood-vessel, he told me, in his weak accents (he stuttered a little), but was doing remarkably well now. Alas! He had wintered in Pisa years before for that same melancholy symptom. I never saw him more. He took me into his room, upstairs, well lined with well-preserved books, neat as a don's rooms, with a good fire, a disused desk, an easy chair, and prints of one or two favourite authors over the chimney-piece. I recollect, lad as I was, envying all this comfort. Poor Mills! his was an easy cheerful decline, I heard; he was never well enough to admit, after that, such harum scarum fellows as myself. I do not believe he was more than thirty-six years old when he died.

I had left college, when fate introduced me to Miss Landon. How could my mother, fate's instrument, let me run such a risk? I can recollect her when she lived in Sloane Street with her grandmother; indeed, I remember her before that time. I recall her exactly; short, not slight, with a most blooming, glowing complexion, beautiful teeth, expression; everything but features — that is, the features were insignificant — they were not unpleasing. She could not have been above eighteen, but she had a fashion of wearing a fanciful little cap on the top of her head, and that suited her exactly. It was an eccentric appearance that she made. She dressed then upon an idea — a sweeter voice I never heard; I mean in speaking. I do not believe that she sang, or that she had any knowledge of music. She had an inborn courtesy of manner, that flattered you, whether she wished it or not: a warm, excitable nature. We met, one evening — but stay — I must sit and think of her awhile. She is too precious a remembrance to be merely made notes of. I should like here to record all that I knew of her, felt for her, heard of her. What is the street, in all that there really *is*, of London, (that is, west of Portland Place and south of Oxford Street,) in which her pleasant voice, her quick step, are *not* at some moment or other present with me?

The remembrance is intermingled with a strange diversity of objects: grave and gay, attractive and revolting: — but let me not moralise, I am not old enough for that yet. She is gone! I will mix up my

colours, prepare my pallet, extend my canvas, and strive to paint her as she was. Nature never made a warmer heart to beat: her affections were concentred in a few objects; but they were strong and unchangeable; in her attachments she was constant, whether they might be directed to her few relations, or to an early friend, or even to an old servant. In her likings this child of fancy was variable, and, I am apt to think, her usual regards never sank skin-deep into her heart. How could they? There were such large demands made upon her good-will; she had such dozens of very particular dear friends; such scores of admirers and worshippers;—but stop, let me not forestall; this was not when I first knew her.

I saw her gradually rise into celebrity, out of a very picturesque retirement — her sojourn with an aged grandmother. I well remember the old-fashioned gentlewoman whose comforts the young poetess consulted with as minute a care as if she had herself had Mrs. Rundell for her godmother, and Dr. Kitchener for her godfather. Every habit, grown into a necessity of old age, every peculiarity, was indulged by L. E. L. with a sweetness of temper that was afterwards shaken, I cannot say changed, by the injustice and envy of society, and by a life of incessant mental exertion. It was during her residence with her grandmother that I first saw a cloud on that clear brow, and observed the sparkling eye thoughtful and downcast. It was during that period of her life that the *slander* which more or less pursued her through her brilliant, but ofttimes,

believe me, weary career, had its origin in some black heart.

I knew that the poisoned arrow had wounded—*I* saw its effects; but was it for me, a young, raw, college simpleton, to show that I even had heard of the disgusting surmise? No! it was enough to pray to Fate that I might be indulged with the good old-fashioned weapon of a horsewhip some day—and I wish I had, too—but 'tis over now.

My sisters, I know, preached prudence, above all in dress and manners; but prudence was not a part of that guileless composition. Our gifted friend defied slander, and gaily referring to the hosts of well-bred and titled dames who visited and caressed her, asked "If any one believed it?" Could any one have the heart to answer "Yes?" And yet the rumour grew and spread, and spread and grew; it ran its course underground: people were mighty civil to her face; but they inflicted on her friends the torture of hearing certain questions in her absence. Who could tell her of it? Not I—I couldn't have vexed her for the world.

I believe it was as well for me, that just as I had had the courage to ask the opinion of L. E. L. upon some poetic effusion of my own (the usual infliction on literary friends),—just as she had presented me with an annual "Friendship's Offering," then all the rage, I was apprised that my commission in the —th was obtained, and I was, luckily, I suppose, sent off to Canada. I went to take leave of L. E. L. and found her sitting in her little drawing-room: I often look at the house; 'tis a

poulterer's shop now, I verily believe in Sloane Street. I found L. E. L. chatting with an antique lady of literary fame, Miss. Spence, arranging, if I remember aright, to join a party at Miss Benger's, in some street, —heavens! how it chills one even to write it now,— beyond that *ultima Thule*, Brunswick Square. I was, I fancied, *de trop*; there seemed to be so much business, the end of which was pleasure, and so much pleasure, which had all the fatigue of business, on hand. I felt stupid, and was almost choked, as I thrust out my great boyish hand to grasp the small, taper fingers of L. E. L. But I was *re*paid by her smile, and her compliment, which was uttered in her happiest way; a kind wish, with a dash of exaggeration in the turning of it; the compliment was a perfect hyperbole; I lived upon it some time, nevertheless. She ran after me down stairs, and put "The Fate of Adelaide" into my hands. "'Twas my first poem," she said; "perhaps you will be so very good as to read it; I believe no one else has." I grasped it greedily, and ran off. "The Fate of Adelaide," (a name extremely vulgarised since the Queen Dowager "came in," as we say,) was written when L. E. L. was only fifteen; it *was* published: the bookseller failed, or she would have had 50*l.* for it. So the first great event of her life began with a disappointment; the last—ah! But I am a fool for dwelling upon *that.* "The Fate of Adelaide" was dedicated to Mrs. Siddons, the early, constant friend of Mrs. Landon, the mother of L. E. L. Singularly enough, Miss Sarah Siddons, the beloved of Sir Thomas

Lawrence, and the early victim—to her great mother's infinite anguish of heart—of consumption, worked the first cap that ever was put on Letitia Landon's head, when a baby. Could the Muses have done more for her?

I think it was about the year 1830, that I passed my first Christmas in London after being frozen in the Canadas. I was much behind-hand, as most travellers are, in my literary knowledge. James's first novel was new to me; I had had but a glimpse of the bright comet that dashed across the horizon in the course of Bulwer. Now and then I had picked up a "Literary Gazette," and had always caught at a fragment of L. E. L.'s poetry in the critiques, with that sort of serene, elderly love, which healthily supplies the place of young enthusiasm. I remember being touched, almost to tears, with her Erinna; it is the mournful strain of an isolated being, and it had not quite ceased to tinge my notion of the writer, when I happened to be at a sort of winter party, the dullest thing in creation, in London; one of those remarkably prosy occasions — either New Year's Eve, or Twelfth Night — one of those occasions in which one is ordered by Act of Parliament to be merry, but on which, from the sinfulness of our natures, we generally prefer to be dull.

It had been a friendly dinner-party. I was the first gentleman to mount upstairs, and to enter — a crow amid a covey of delicate wood-pigeons — the sacred precincts of the drawing-room. On these occasions, a deep silence usually succeeds the clatter of the ladies—

Heaven knows what they talk about after dinner! I heard an expiring lamentation upon the prevalence of measles, from two mammas, across the circle, and a last trait of the last baby from another delicate little matron, and then all was still; when suddenly the door opened, and a lady, young and fair, and dressed in that style that marks a mixture with all sorts of society, came into the circle. I remember her very dress; it was of scarlet — cashmere, do the women call it? — so very bright! and her hair, which used to be in little curls, was braided flat on her forehead. I thought her grown; she was stouter — a little; and the same fresh, clear complexion, the gentle voice, and ready compliment were there — it was L. E. L.!

The recognition, — but let that pass, — it fills my eyes with tears when I think of it. Yet, I do not believe that she cared about me, — it was the general yet hearty kindness of her nature, the ready sympathy with every feeling, that dictated that cordial welcome home to the soldier, uncouth in ideas from long ramblings, — more American than English; — as shy as ever, but as romantic too. With all this, I always found myself at ease with L. E. L. Let the world say what it likes, her deportment with gentlemen, and with young men in particular, was at once correct and natural. She disregarded censure, because she was unconscious of any design to ensnare those who sought her society into professions of admiration, and in fact, she was only not natural when she attempted to throw off her manifest indifference to what is generally called flirtation. I

never saw her lose the modesty and dignity of a well-educated gentlewoman; indeed she was one who, in her *heart*, — I will not say, to outward appearance, — justly appreciated the various kinds of tributes offered to her genius, or to her attractions; — I do not use the word beauty; she had never any distinct claims to that attribute of mighty sway.

From the evening of our recognition we became fast friends. Do not smile, fair reader. I am a widower now; and the bond which tied me was framed even during the very period of my long, frequent visits to a certain corner house in the lugubrious enclosure of Hans Place, Chelsea. I sometimes turn out of my way to look at that silent square, wherein, in a house dedicated to the purposes of education, dwelt three maiden ladies, and a venerable father; with them lived, or boarded, L. E. L. They were staid and serious, and felt deeply the responsibility of their calling, and had received Miss Landon on the terms and in the character of a parlour-boarder, as much from affection for her, as from interest; and, indeed, I think the incessant callers, notes, and messages which ensued must have put these excellent ladies out of their way. But they all loved *her;* and she, in return, was the most considerate of human beings, and respected their wishes and their convenience as much as if they had been duchesses. The aged gentleman too was cheered by that flow of good-humour, which, whether in the hilarity of a prosperous and flattering career, or in the gloom of secret anxiety, was exhaustless to *him*, and to all who,

like that individual, were dependent upon the solace of kindness for cheerfulness and comfort. How well do I remember the drawing-room fire-place, beneath what had been a window, but which was converted into a recess, lined with shelves, and paved with shells, and teacups and saucers of delicate china, and teapots, and small vases! How we used to sit there, over an expiring fire, she unwilling to have it replenished, because the day's *séance* was nearly over: — the little square was in gloom, the afternoon London mist had overspread it: — "There will be no more callers to-day," was her usual speech; and, when not engaged, L. E. L. always, in the winter at least, sat with the family in a small square parlour, lined with good book-shelves, and furnished with less precision than the guest-chamber. She composed and wrote, she told me, in a small attic at the very top of the house, looking upon the octagon garden of Hans Place, dotted by the handful of children who play therein; upon the turning, too, down from Hans Street; and thence might L. E. L. spy out, like "Sister Ann," "who was coming." And numerous were the visitors: ladies of quality, who had read the sonnets of the poetess on "terraces by moonlight;" critics, and their victims; grave travellers, who had issued their quartos; young prodigies, old coxcombs, American tourists, briefless barristers, and profitless curates, all found an entrance into that long parlour, opening behind into a drear enclosure of a garden. How often have I found my friend taking breath in that dingy garden, from the hot presence of a reviewer, or the chilling address of a dis-

appointed author! How readily did she enter into the sympathies of those around her; soothe the blistered vanity, console the rejected, and congratulate the successful! How would she recapitulate (to me, who knew her so well) the occurrences of the morning! Her little touches of character were charming, and had the piquancy of satire, without its sting. It was an intoxicating career, to all appearance, but, like other intoxications, it had its collapse. *She was not happy.*

It was long before I found that out, and even now, I do but partly guess the cause of those fluctuating spirits which break out into melancholy and complaint in her writings. Most people think the writings and the character of L. E. L. a manifest contrast; I am not of that opinion. None of her works, indeed, either prose or poetry, give anything like a notion of the gaiety of her conversation, at times,—the delicacy of her discrimination, or the original turn of her repartees; but they afford a real insight into the passionate feelings of her heart. Sensitive, constant creature! How was that heart afterwards wrung by disappointment! I am glad I did not witness it all.

I was abroad when L. E. L., as Mr. Blanchard relates, peremptorily rejected the honest affections of one who besought her to give him a legal right to protect her from the world's censure; I can therefore offer no account, either of the beginning or the close of that painful affair. When I returned, I found that the establishment in Hans Place was broken up; the house was empty, and L. E. L. had been sometime domesti-

cated in Berkeley Street West, under the care of a lady as kind and as respectable as those with whom she had resided for years. This lady also loved her, and she still loves her memory, as that of a daughter cherished and lost; for her power of attaching to her those with whom she lived was a peculiar attribute of L. E. L. Unlike those literary ladies (as bad as three days' agues) who, all-engrossed with themselves, mistake the privilege of preeminence, and are odious as women, selfish, hard, exacting, though sentimental and charming in their works, L. E. L. was humble in her every-day deportment. All servants became fond of her; the humble crew of dependants found her patient of their errors, and careful of their feelings. Printers, and their emissaries — small, half-ruined publishers, for whom she wrote in many instances gratuitously — met with a courtesy which was inherent in her. No being was ever more active in serving others. But, to my point.

I found her, as I have said, variable in spirits, and so far uncertain in temper, that she would sometimes break forth in a bitter invective upon the hollowness of society — the worldliness of all mankind — "everybody was selfish and cold — there was no one to be trusted — no one to be believed." But, the instant afterwards, her fine heart redeemed itself. She made exceptions to her censure, spoke warmly and eloquently upon the merits of some friend — and then suddenly breaking off in the middle of her harangue, would burst into a flood of tears — check them — walk about the room, and sit

down again. This only happened once or twice; I cannot say I often saw L. E. L. shed tears. She was not a person to vent her sorrows in that way; but she had, when sorrowing, an indescribable expression, melancholy and imploring, almost agonised, which I never saw on any other face. I hasten from the remembrance;—looked she so when her sole English female attendant was sent from her, from Cape Coast, back to that England which poor L. E. L. so yearned to see,—when she was left to all the horrors of that mysterious castle?—that castle on the rocks, to which she refers in her own touching manner, when she writes, "On three sides we are surrounded by the sea. I like the perpetual dash on the rocks; one wave comes up after another, and is for ever dashed in pieces, like human hopes that only swell to be disappointed. We advance — up springs the shining froth of love or hope, 'a moment seen, and gone for ever.'"

I confess the changing spirits of L. E. L. did not surprise me. Her health was broken, and she rested solely on her own efforts. Her immediate relations also depended upon her exertions; and, believe me, the daily task-work, the beautiful lines for the "Easter Offering," the "Drawing-room Scrap Book," and other undertakings, were often penned when the throbbing head would gladly have reposed upon her pillow, and the over-excited and restless mind would scarcely fix itself on its appointed theme; and that with the loathing of a slave—a literary slave—to the enforced subject. Heavens! what a profanation to bow down that

sweet Muse to such subjects as the tastes of the day suggested! Sometimes flesh and blood rebelled against it—she had promised, on one occasion, a sonnet to some periodical; worn out, the night before, by previous exertion, she had retired to rest without writing it. She slept long, as one exhausted sleeps—perhaps her dreams were of some happier days, for she awoke refreshed. It was late; the emissary of the journal had arrived—the poem was to go to press that morning. The poetess sprang up—knelt down to her little writing-table, and, whilst the boy waited below, in a quarter of an hour's space, wrote some exquisite stanzas, and sent them off to the printer.

But, in spite of great and constant success, she was always poor. I asked not why—in my opinion 'tis a direct insult either to the dead or living to dive into their money matters, except you happen to be their executor, or to meddle with their cash accounts—a liberty you would not take with your own brother, unless he had become a bankrupt; and nothing—no nothing ever disgusted me more than the tradesmanlike exposition of poor Scott's concerns. I really thought, when I read it, it might have been a sort of parody upon those dull reports one sees in "The Times" of the proceedings of the Bankruptcy Court—Mottram's case in little;—we wanted nothing but the name of Mr. Commissioner Fonblanque, or of his brother Williams, to complete the summary. So, dear L. E. L., I will not touch upon thy difficulties, in detail. I merely repeat "she was not rich." She had one vital, noble, absorb-

ing object in view — the establishment and promotion of a brother, whose wants and whose means one may comprise in few words—he had been an Oxonian, and became a curate. Can one say more? And to this tie was every fond thought given; yes, whilst the world taxed her with more than levity, impugned her of debasing attachments, and pursued her with slanders, to this tie were her time, her health, her hopes, her prayers bestowed.

But think not, ye who carelessly, or maliciously, or enviously repeated or invented calumnies of one of whom English women might well be proud — think not that your shafts fell powerless. They struck into her heart. Think not that the bravado, sometimes uttered, was not followed, in secret, by burning resentment, and bitter tears. Ye, who could convert the carelessness of an occupied and innocent mind into proofs of guilt, be satisfied of this — the arrow sped — the wound it made was a festering and deadly wound, and was never, never healed. I know it — I could tell it by a thousand proofs, by the bitterness which characterised a nature as kind as ever woman owned — by the very endeavour to conceal the pang—by the pride which now burst forth from one as devoid of that quality heretofore, as she was of the envy which she encountered. I knew it, by the sudden and sharp, feverish illness, with no source but a harassed and over-wrought mind, a wounded spirit that disdained, on that one point, sympathy, and shrunk, on that one point, from confidence.

Her gaiety was now forced: and I noticed, for the first time, a sharpness in her replies. Her spirits, which heretofore had had the aroma and the sparkling of champagne, had become like the effervescence of a saline draught; but the wormwood never long preponderated in her disposition. She was still lauded and calumniated, flattered and betrayed, by half the world. What a picture of society? But depend on this, ye, whose eyes this retrospect may reach, that the venom of mankind is called forth by the celebrity of others, as, —to what shall I compare it?—to the guano, may be, which scorches up delicate plants, kills animals, converts the roots of dahlias into blackened corses—but brings forward fat cabbages, coarse turnips, ungainly potatoes, and unsightly beanstalks, into a coarse luxuriance of growth. Some people escape wonderfully with all their imperfections on their heads, and deserving to be shunned, they manage to keep their ground. How well is this illustrated in the exquisite novel of "Violet." Poor Violet—(is it moral or not to pity her?)—humbled, repentant, crushed, creeps into her opera-box, a shawl thrown around the form which had once exhibited on the stage; she dares not raise her eyes to the high-born and well-established matrons about and around her. She looks straight forward, and sees her former associate, a woman of the world, a woman of intrigue, but married; she beholds her received, undaunted, her sins well-varnished over, her reputation secure. Yet, those who could dive into the recesses of thought, would find the breaking heart of Violet half ready for

heaven; that of the respectable friend filled with the deadliest and most culpable of passions. Well was it said by a lady whose course of life one blighting sin has defaced (and most justly)—"I am not so concerned and indignant at not being received by virtuous women; it is when I reflect by *whom* I am cut that my spirit rises to bitterness."

The gifted and the unprotected can do nothing unseen. If an elderly friend waited for L.E.L.'s manuscript while she scored it off in her little drawing-room, he was sure to be minuted by some one who could tell you the next day, with the precision of a witness in a court of justice, how long he had been there. Much was invented, much was amplified; much was believed by the distant and the unknown, nothing by those who were near and intimate with her whom her own sex chose to vilify, and whom some of mine—I feel a spasm in my right foot when I think of it, a sort of impulse that I will not specify—were low enough to tax their empty brains to talk about. But let us have done with this. She had many true and generous friends. Among these, one instance: a lady of the highest respectability, truly religious, the mother of grown-up daughters, long and intimately acquainted with L. E. L., upon her engagement with Mr. Maclean, saw the risk of further slander in that very engagement. She took the unprotected authoress to her own luxurious house, where propriety in its fairest forms—the respected mother, and her good and gentle daughters—guarded her whom her own sex should have shielded from reproach. And

there she staid until she left for Cape Coast Castle. But I forget myself; this was after the time when her engagement to Mr. Maclean was renewed, and finally arranged. Let it pass; and now for a few words on that engagement. The common surmise is, that L. E. L. married the governor of Cape Coast *to be* married—to fly from the slander—to have a home and a sanction. No—these were not her reasons; for she was truly and ardently attached to one whom she declared was the only man she had ever loved. She confided in him, she pined in his absence, she sacrificed for him the friends, the country, the society, to which she had been accustomed. But she made one false step. Mr. Maclean had sought her hand in marriage; it was promised; and then, after a temporary separation, after a kindly farewell, after several letters, written in the approved style of persons so situated in respect to each other, behold! the correspondence on the gentleman's part suddenly ceased. No explanation—no regrets followed. Never shall I forget the anguish of my poor friend. I have often been touched to tears by that exquisite exclamation of Beatrice to Hero, "Would I were a man, dear coz, that I could avenge thee!" I am a man, but my hand was stayed, and I was compelled to see her suffer a long, long attack of feverishness, depression, and inertia, and to be silent!

Weeks passed away—weeks of that time when everyone is away from London, and the few humanised creatures in it draw closer together. I called every day to inquire in Berkeley Street,—"a little better—not so well—at last down stairs." I saw her. No news

from Scotland? No: but a thousand surmises, a thousand hopes and conjectures, a certainty of anything but that he meant to withdraw, were hurriedly expressed; her cheek flushed as she spoke; — I dropped the subject. A few weeks elapsed: I was a privileged person, and called to take L. E. L. a drive in my cab. She came gaily out, but looked shattered, thin, and was careless in her attire. We drove round the inner circle of the Regent's Park; it was a soft and bright morning, and the air blew freshly on the delicate cheek beside me. There was upon her face, nevertheless, that peculiar look of suffering which I never saw on any other countenance; as if every nerve had the tic-douloureux — as if every moment were torture. She abandoned herself to dejection, and spoke not. At last, I took the privilege of a friend, and gently remonstrated with her. I pointed out to her that she was unreasonable to indulge in sorrow for a man who had evidently given up all thoughts of *her;* that it was inconsistent with the dignity due to herself — it was unworthy — unwise — distressing to her friends. She answered me — I did not dare to look at her face as she spoke — (we drove round and round); but I hear her voice now; it was very low, and inexpressibly plaintive, as she said, "But I have never loved any one else." This was *her* reasoning, poor child of song! and she proffered no other. I answered not — she sank into silence. We drove on — the air seemed to soothe her — when suddenly she declared that she was tired and faint, and begged me, somewhat hastily, to take her home. I did so; and I

saw her not again for some time. But I *heard* that she was constant to her (as she had then declared to me) first attachment, because she then refused an offer from a gentleman whom I knew by name.

The next time that I saw L. E. L., she was all joy; Mr. Maclean had returned to London; she had seen him; the engagement had been renewed. They were to be married in the spring. "And to go to Cape Coast?" I asked with a shiver. "Yes," she answered carelessly, as if that arrangement were of little moment; and indeed she all along spoke of her emigrating to that Land of Death in the same light fashion as if she were going to take a journey into Yorkshire. She was now all excitement — I hardly dare to call it joy; it was, at any rate, such joy as one feels after being pulled up out of a wet ditch, and told that one has three miles to walk home: it was the joy of a person released from a pressing sorrow, but not restored to ultimate peace of mind. I do not mean to offer explanation here; I merely state what I saw, or fancied I saw. There was always to me a mystery in the sudden breaking off and the sudden renewal of that ill-omened engagement; I *did* think its dissolution might have been caused by some *kind* friend repeating certain reports to Mr. Maclean; but I was mistaken. And to do Mr. Maclean justice, he showed a thorough contempt of those slanders; he treated them as a man would do, who knows the world well, and who understood the character of women better than one would have conjectured.

Well, they were engaged; and I must here declare, for the sake of my future emancipation from the jokes

of saucy cousins, that I never in my life said one word of love to L. E. L. on my own account. If I had, she would have answered me as she did to another friend, whom she did not wish to lose as a friend, but had rejected as a lover; the answer was very good, but on second thoughts, I will not put it down in this retrospect; it may have been a circular that she kept for her admirers, and I do not wish to give offence.

All was now fixed as fate; but I never could see L. E. L. I saw, once, the ghost-like form of him whom she named to me as her future lord, and he seemed to me like one who had buried all joy in Africa, or whose feelings had been frozen up during his last inauspicious visit to Scotland; but since mine is a retrospect of the departed, not a volley of shafts at the living, I will say little more of one who must ever bear about in his heart a mournful remembrance of the wife suddenly snatched from him, and who must associate with his own country her image when he took her from her English home. Mr. Maclean, I *know*, pointed out strongly the disadvantages and dangers of his colonial station, and he certainly warned the destined one of what she had to encounter; but she was resolute.

The marriage took place, to a certain extent, privately; and it was not acknowledged till a month afterwards — why, I never could tell; and if Mrs. Maclean were satisfied, I had no right to be displeased. At last it appeared in the papers, and she prepared for her departure. I rarely saw her, for she was, to my surprise, as much involved in literary pursuits as ever;

writing to the last moment, and making arrangements, on the eve of her departure, for new works, and she was, evidently, to be no more independent of exertion than if she had remained single. But her spirits had evidently revived; she appeared generally cheerful, as in earlier days; her mind never once misgave her, as to the climate or the mode of life which she was destined to encounter. One day I called on her; she was taking leave of a foreigner, a publisher, to whom she had been peculiarly kind. The poor man could scarcely utter his thanks, in his broken English. His expressions would have been ludicrous if they had not proceeded from the heart, and their truth attested by eyes swimming in tears. And it was for no common benefits that he thanked L. E. L. For years she had given him her aid gratuitously, for his publication. She assured him that she would still do so. "Ah! but you will not be here. I shall not have them from your hand." He retired, overcome. I, too, took my leave. I saw her no more except on one occasion.

The last Coronation took place the very day before the departure of L. E. L. She who once had enjoyed all exciting amusements, had hoped to have left London before the event. But it was not so.

The night before that on which Victoria was crowned was, as every one must acknowledge, one of general insanity: London one great, though free Bedlam — club-houses in commotion — hotels distracted — public-houses run mad — waiters wanting strait-jackets — and milliners and mantua-makers raving lunatics. The

lucid interval did not come till a week afterwards. That night, surely every one must remember, how post-horses were hurrying in, and what cargoes of band-boxes were on every carriage, how omnibuses even ran as if they had right to share in the general delirium, and all the cabmen drove as if they were tipsy. I am persuaded there were not ten people in London that night, sound in their reason. Housemaids were making shakedowns for country cousins of their master's, in desperate haste — foot-boys were cleaning shoes over-night. Everything but washing and eating was to be done six hours before the usual time. Ladies were dressing for the Abbey at twelve o'clock. The hair-dressers came, as ghosts do, at midnight. Well! I think I should have done the same if I had paid ten guineas for a peep at the ceremony.

To add to the general fatigue, and to prepare themselves better for the exploits of the next day, it was the fashion, that night, to give a party: this was a proof of the predominant insanity. Creatures who were to steal out before the cock crew should have gone to roost with the fowls. Nature says so; there was, however, a good reason why a party should be given for L. E. L., once more to collect around her those whom she had often cheered, and whom she valued.

I am told it was an interesting evening. Several persons of rank, many of high talent, friends in the true sense, some of them, for their friendship has survived the grave, bade her adieu that evening; among the rest, the good and kind, and ill-fated Earl of Mun-

ster, who always manifested an interest in the talents of L. E. L., and who valued her merits. I was not present—I had a glimpse of her the next day.

She was overwhelmed with tickets for the *déjeûnés* of different clubs; and, for a short time, she looked on the unrivalled pageant from the window of St. James's Street. As the Lancers, in a style never to be forgotten, rode down the street, I, who had mingled with the crowd, caught a glimpse—my last glimpse of L. E. L. I saw her white veil thrown back as she rose quickly, and leant forward to look on those proud horsemen—the flower of the aristocracy. The next day she had departed.

Seven years have passed away, since on New Year's Day, 1838, I heard that she had died—that bright intellect was extinct—that noble heart had ceased to beat! All we know of her death is this: she was found, *half an hour after taking from a black boy a cup of coffee, brought by her order*, leaning against the door of her chamber, sitting as if she had sunk down in an effort to rush to the door for help. A bruise was on her cheek—a slight bruise on the hand, which was pressed upon the floor:—(these details were not in the inquest, but are *true*)—an empty phial (so said the maid who found her) in her hand. The same day witnessed her death—the coroner's inquest—the interment of her loved remains. This is all we know: how she died, whether by the fiat which calls many to their last account without a moment's warning, or—but I will not—I cannot pursue the speculation; she is

gone! Some future day the dread mystery may, perhaps, be solved.*

* It is now seven years since these pages on L. E. L. were published. The mystery of her fate remains, as it then was, unexplained. The interesting account, by Mr. Cruikshank, of her last hours, for the perusal of which I am indebted to the "Athenæum" (No. 1331.), gives no new light upon the subject. It is, however, gratifying to the friends of one still affectionately remembered and regretted, because it attests her cheerfulness, and alludes to the happy terms on which she appeared to continue with her husband, even so late as the very night before her death.

Nevertheless, three or four days previously to that event, Mrs. Maclean wrote to her absent friends letters which would have filled their minds with anxiety for her welfare, had she not been beyond the reach of sympathy before those letters were received by those for whom they were destined. Some portions of these communications, which were brought to England at the same time with the news of her death, have been given in Mr. Laman Blanchard's Life of L. E. L. It must be acknowledged that they did not particularise or even hint at any distinct acts of unkindness on the part of Mr. Maclean, but consisted certainly of expressions of annoyance at the peculiarities of his character; his reserve towards herself; her exclusion from some parts of the castle or fort, in which he passed much of his time; and her solitariness during the whole of the day, for no reasons which appeared to her satisfactory. They were not the letters of a newly-married and happy wife, who feels, however distant she may be from her native country, that she has not confided her felicity to one regardless of the importance of the sacred trust. Upon one point only did she make anything like a complaint; and this was, that, in spite of her entreaties that a Mrs. Bayley, who had gone out to Cape Coast as her attendant, and who was, at that time, the only white woman in the place, was ordered by Mr. Maclean to return to England within two days after Mrs. Maclean wrote the last letter that I ever received from her. That decision seemed to give her inexpressible vexation, as, indeed, it naturally might.

If, on receiving the news of L. E. L.'s death, her friends appeared to be unduly suspicious, or unjustly resentful in the first outbreak of their feelings, there had been circumstances which sufficiently excused that bitterness. Few of them had seen enough of Mr. Maclean to feel that confidence in him which Mr. Cruikshank seems to imply that he merited. Mr. Maclean had, during his engagement to L. E. L., once suddenly and tacitly withdrawn from her society, and relinquished all correspondence with her for months, and had then, as tacitly and as suddenly, resumed their former footing. I presume that he explained himself to her; but to others this proceeding appeared unjustifiable. For several weeks his marriage with the ill-fated L. E. L. was not announced in the newspapers, the reasons assigned being, that Mr. Maclean did not wish it to be known at Cape Coast before he arrived there himself. Of course, no marriage can be invidiously termed a private one at which a brother officiates, and at which one of the earliest and kindest friends of L. E. L., Sir E. L. Bulwer Lytton, acted as father; but the measure, as far as Mrs. Maclean was concerned, was neither wise nor satisfactory, especially as from all friends, except the parties present, the concealment was maintained, certainly for a fortnight, much against Mrs. Maclean's wishes. Again: on nearing Cape Coast, Mr. Maclean insisted on landing first, in the very midst of a fearful storm, leaving his wife in the ship, at anchor, notwithstanding her alarm at seeing him expose himself to so much peril, and, perhaps, with some social feeling of surprise at the sort of mystery and airs of precaution which appeared to characterise his conduct.

One source of just remonstrance on the part of Mrs. Maclean's relatives and friends, was Mr. Maclean's refusal, in the first instance, to take out, as an attendant on his wife, an English female servant. At last he silenced complaints by saying that the wife of the steward of the ship, a Mrs. Bayley, should act in that capacity; and, eventually, Mrs. Bayley proved herself to be of so much use to L. E. L.—indeed, so indispensable to her, that Mrs. Maclean seems, in the absence of all other female companions, almost to have felt something like affection and confidence in that person. What, then, could those who mourned for L. E. L. think of this woman being sent away?—of her leaving Mrs. Maclean without a single European attendant?—and of Mr. Maclean's permitting

his delicate wife to depend entirely upon African servants, on whose fidelity and capability she could not rely?—to say nothing of the moral conduct of that depraved portion of the African population. And yet, even whilst I state all these points, I am willing to admit that they may seem worse than they really were; that Mr. Maclean may have had reasons for his conduct of which we are ignorant; and that the very peculiar notions which he appeared to have of his duty as a husband may have been in part the result of his long residence away from every gentle European influence, acting on a character naturally stern, though capable, as L. E. L. declared, of generous impulses, and even of the kindest consideration for others.

Mr. Maclean was not a prepossessing man. His countenance had not the openness that wins upon strangers; his manners were cold, and even abrupt; what he said, however, gave the impression of good sense and sincerity. He appeared in ill health, and never looked happy; it is but just to him to state that he warned Mrs. Maclean of all the solitude, and difficulties, and privations of a life passed on African shores. From the few opportunities which I had of judging, I believe him to have been extremely attached to his wife; but, like a Scotchman, and a shy man as he was, averse to showing his feelings. My opinion was confirmed by an excellent friend of Mrs. Maclean's, who had every means of judging, as L. E. L. was married from her house. The neglect or haste with which the inquest was carried on, and the irregularity of so important an inquiry, begun and ended—in presence of the scarcely cold remains—before that day's sun-set, were facts not calculated to soothe the agonised suspicions of devoted friends, who had so lately parted from Mrs. Maclean in the full enjoyment of health. It was taken for granted at Cape Coast that she died from a dose of prussic acid, a decision resting on the testimony of Mrs. Bayley alone; and her statement, that she found Mrs. Maclean with a phial of that poison in her hands—quite dead, was admitted as a proof sufficient to dispense with any necessity for a *post-mortem* examination. When this event was mentioned to the late Mr. Liston, he remarked that *had* she died from taking prussic acid, the muscles would have been so instantaneously relaxed, that her hand could not have retained the phial. It seems, indeed, to have been a matter of chance

to what cause her death was to be attributed; for, in the copied notes of the inquest, which were sent to England, the word *Hyoscyamus* (Henbane) was inserted in the text, but altered to *Hydrocyanic* acid on the margin. Upon inquiry in this country, it was found that Mrs. Maclean had never been in the habit, whilst in England, of taking prussic acid to relieve spasms. Neither had it ever been prescribed for her. The medicine chest which had been fitted up for her by Mr. Squires, of Oxford Street, did not contain that medicine. None of the prescriptions which he had made up for her for years,—and she was in the habit of having all that were ordered for her made up by that eminent chemist,—included prussic acid. Mrs. Sheldon and her daughters, who had watched over Mrs. Maclean during a long illness, and who knew her habitual course of life thoroughly during the two years that she resided under their roof, asserted positively that they had never known her take it; and Dr. Thomson, who had attended her as a friend for fifteen years, never ordered it for her in any form, as he stated at the time of her death, in a letter to "The Times."

One fact, apparently slight, but really important, seems to have been overlooked; an African boy, of about ten years of age, had the charge of attending in a gallery, into which Mrs. Maclean's dressing-room opened. That fatal morning he brought her, about half an hour before she was found expiring, a cup of coffee, by her orders. The cup was standing empty on her table when Mrs. Bayley returned to the dressing-room. Mrs. Bayley mentioned this circumstance, on her arrival in England, to the late Mrs. Liddiard, of Streatham. I cannot remember whether it was stated in the inquest; but I think not. Most of the points here recited have been discussed in Mr. Blanchard's Life of L. E. L., and in recalling them to the recollection of others I indulge myself with a hope—probably a vain one—of yet eliciting from some source not at present discovered, some explanation of the facts which are at present so contradictory and inexplicable.

Mr. Maclean died several years ago at Cape Coast. A gentleman, stationed on the coast of Africa, took some pains to learn whether or not, on his death-bed, he had referred to his wife's early doom; but, if the sources on which this gentleman rested

are to be relied upon, Mr. Maclean made no allusion to the name, or to the fate of his wife.

It must for ever be regretted that instant steps were not taken to inquire into the causes of this most mournful conclusion of a life of brilliant success, yet full of sorrow. There is something inexpressibly awful in the hasty summons; the ink with which she had inscribed a few lines to an absent friend, scarcely dried; no farewell uttered to the husband, with whom she had lived apart from every other relationship of her life, for two short months; no sign of consciousness, or foreknowledge of her fate, traceable: the daily duties of her day just beginning—and then ceasing for ever. One may easily conceive the bewilderment, the horror of all around her. But, after the first agonies of the moment, the natural impulse seemed to be to inquire, not cursorily, but perseveringly, into all that had preceded those few minutes of despair and awe. And there was one such effect of the hurry, if we may not call it the negligence of that day, that there were not wanting many, who, not knowing L. E. L. as I knew her, as her many friends knew her, were too ready to impute that day's event to suicide. There were not wanting those who forgot that she did not go out to Cape Coast the spoiled daughter of a happy home, unfit to buffet with her destiny; but the sorely-tried architect of her own high fame; the carrier out of her own honourable independence; the heroine of that domestic sphere where trials, disappointments, and difficulties fit the patient and the strong-hearted for vicissitudes of which the child of happier fortunes cannot form an idea. To great sensibility she united great elasticity; she could live with persons of various tempers and every diversity of opinion, and could agree with all. Her faith in a future state, where all that seems unequal shall be adjusted, all that seems dark explained, was—although I must admit that she was sometimes guilty of speaking in a manner to justify a contrary belief—sincere. In all the charities of life, in the purity of her mind, and in the utter unselfishness of her conduct, she showed a practical piety, which atoned in the sight of those who loved her for such errors as human nature is prone to, and which is now the greatest of their consolations whenever her memory was recalled.

That she was in full possession of her reason at the time of her

death is fully proved; and, thus conscious, she was, independent of all other considerations, too much attached to her only brother to have distressed him by any act of self-destruction.

Mrs. Maclean's death left her mother dependent on others for support. On visiting Mrs. Landon with her daughter, before he left England, Mr. Maclean told her that he should continue to her the same sum that his wife had contributed to her mother's comfort. After his wife's death, he wrote to Mrs. Landon, offering not only to continue that allowance, but to double it. In the agony of her heart, Mrs. Landon sent a reply, saying, that could she be assured that her daughter had been happy in her marriage, she would gladly accept that aid. No answer was even returned to this letter; and Mr. Maclean, ill-advisedly, as every one must think, lost that opportunity of proving how much he valued his wife's wishes, and how generously he could forgive the natural doubts of a mother under a bereavement so sudden, and so unexplained.

The statements I have made respecting the expressions of discomfort which Mrs. Maclean conveyed to her absent friends, are founded on her last letters to myself; that respecting the hydrocyanic acid being substituted in the notes of the inquest for hyoscyamus was told me by the Rev. Whittington Landon.

I feel a great reluctance in reviving the details I have here given, to write anything which may seem prejudicial to Mr. Maclean, since though he is passed away from a sphere in which blame can wound him, he is also removed from the power of self-vindication. Whilst I do not think that he was calculated to make L. E. L. happy, I must also own that I can see no motive for his marrying her except a sincere and disinterested attachment. There is every reason to conclude that he was as much awe-struck at his wife's sudden death, and as ignorant as to its cause, as others, who stood by, and looked on those pale and sad remains. He is only to be censured, as far as we can see, for a grievous error of judgment, in not resorting to the means usually employed of inquiring into the solemn secrets of a sudden death, and dispelling, as far as human knowledge could do, the painful incertitude which has not worn away with time.

Montmorency, May 21, 1853.

CHAP. V.

JOHN GALT.

WHO remembers reading a strange, flighty production, published some five-and-twenty years ago, and enjoyed only by a few peculiar minds, called "The Majolo?" It was the unread work of John Galt, the afterwards popular author of "The Ayrshire Legatees," "The Entail," and "The Provost,"—the last book was an especial favourite of George IV.

L. E. L. said truly and wittily of Galt, "that he was, like Antæus, never strong, except when he touched his mother earth:" I remember the saying being repeated to Galt, and I think I see his countenance, and hear his dry, incredulous attempt at a laugh. But L. E. L. was right; and, indeed, as a critic she was generally right. Galt was never in his element out of Scotland, no, nor even out of the Lowlands of Scotland: the homely, saving ways; the intense humour, the simple pathos, of which there are abundant specimens in middle Scottish life, to him were natural and habitual. The essential character of his literary powers was fidelity; he dreamed he had imagination, whilst he possessed little more than a power of close observation.

"The Majolo" is a desultory, ill-written composition, the weeding of a powerful mind. Crude philosophy and Scotch superstition appear in many of its passages; there are, however, touches in it worthy of the masterly hand which afterwards effected so much, and achieved for its owner so just a fame. On looking at Galt one could never connect him with "The Majolo," the travelled and accomplished man of mystery and romance; nor even, when in the full vigour of health, could an observer read in his countenance any of the varying characteristics which afterwards peeped forth in "The Annals of the Parish." There never was a being for whom illness did so much in the way of personal improvement as Galt. When in the prime of manhood and the vigour of health he was an ungainly man: of height above the common, with a common-place, though somewhat handsome cast of features; a very strong Scottish accent, a great lumbering figure, a hardness of aspect altogether; and there was nothing of that quiet dignity and gentle deference to others that softened the sterner attributes of Allan Cunningham, and which afterwards pleased in the later years of Galt.

At the time when I thought him least agreeable, Galt was living in Lindesay Row, Chelsea; now for a puzzle to my readers — how many in a hundred may chance to know Lindesay Row, Chelsea? I should not like to venture a wager even upon one. Look out, gentle reader, to the right, as you pass over Battersea Bridge, and you will see, facing the river, a row of good, even stately houses, all white, terminating abruptly, as

if it had been at one time proposed to form a terrace of considerable extent, and that the scheme had been prematurely abandoned — that is Lindesay Row; and some very goodly houses are in that unfashionable row, — houses with spacious drawing-rooms, adorned with rich cornices — houses with wide entrances and fine staircases, and a view of the river from their balconies, enough to tempt one to that delicious sort of idleness which takes natural objects for its excuse.

Beyond Lindesay Row, which, I have no hesitation in affirming, contains houses fit for noblemen, are seen willows laving themselves in the river's brink, and a green slope, and chimney-tops rising between a mantling grove, and the delicious grounds of Lord Cremorne are pointed out to you. Now, they are trampled down by crowds, and profaned by noise, and the hurry and exertion to which we English people give the name of amusement. The "much for our money," the extensive bill of fare which we expect when we pay our dirty shillings, and resolve to get through so much of the business of diversion on a fixed day. Cremorne House once stood secluded and peaceful in its dewy meads. It was a memento of the days of Ranelagh, its neighbour on the other side of the Bridge. It reminded one of more peaceful, perhaps more elegant, times, when the heavy barge, towed along, or the light summer boat, had possession of the river-gods, and moved in their security, not expecting to be borne down by yon rude steamboat, that I see in my mind's eye now, as I stand (in thought) on Battersea Bridge, and turn (by a

figure of speech) towards the New Pier at Chelsea Reach — insolent little structure, which vulgarises that picturesque row of houses, many of them lighted with plate-glass windows, and other features of importance, that never were built to look out upon such craft as now plies near it, and bids its tranquillity depart.

At right angles with Lindesay Row stands Beaufort Row, and it was in one of the small tenements in Beaufort Row that I used to meet Galt. We talk of literary *coteries*, what a singular theme would be the various literary coteries, past and present, of this metropolis — the men who toiled together, and fed each other's minds by the inevitable communication of thought — the author's and the author's friend — the strange companionships — the long life associations which what we call *chance* produces, and has produced, — the tea-tables of the departed. For, in most instances, the literary part of the community could afford little more than tea-tables, — and they were to be envied. Restore to me the tea-table, and I will give up to any one who hungers for it the costly eight o'clock dinner, — yes, even the party more numerous than the Graces, and fewer than the Muses. I will give up the *déjeûner*, and the *déjeûner dansant*, and the *matinée musicale*, and the *soirée musicale*, and all the musicales that ever drove one crazy — give me but the tea-table, but give it me such as I knew it of yore.

But to return to the strange companionships which fate forms for us. Galt's intimate associate at that time was a literary receptacle of knowledge, a man brimful

of acquirement, rich in quality as the finest champagne, but bottled, and cellared up with as much care. He was a specimen of the pure literary man of the olden time. His occupation, indeed, was that of a clerk in the Record Office; added to which, he had the onerous office of eking out the powers of a certain nobleman's brains to do their work. He was, in short, a private secretary. In that capacity he, perhaps, acquired the great talent for silence which he possessed, and which made him such a good listener to the long stories of Galt.

Galt seemed to me to be by nature a male Scherazaide. He had the gift of narrative, so rare, so fine, so seemingly simple, but so inexplicably difficult; repartee is nothing to it: the power of relating a story, without affectation, or weariness to your listener, is one above all price. Women excel in it more than men: but then they are aided by the varying countenance, the soft voice, the quick apprehension of an auditor's feelings. They are, it is true, apt to hurry; and hurry is fatal to a narrative. Coleridge had it: at his friend Mr. Gilman's, at Highgate, what heads were bowed down to listen to his half-dissertations, half-narratives; his eye mildly glistening all the while, his white hair falling about his neck, his accents trilling in the ear of young and old, gay and grave. Moore had it, but in a very different mode: his stories were short and pithy, without the thoughtful moral of Coleridge, or the strong situations which Galt delighted to depict. For Galt was melodramatic in his

tales; there was always a surprise, a mystery, an anomaly, at all events, at the end of them. He spoke in a low, monotonous voice, with much of the Greenock accent, marring its sweetness, but adding to its effect; and he bent his high forehead down, and his eyes, long, narrow, and deep-sunk, were fixed steadily upon those of him to whom he addressed himself; and he went on, on, stopping at intervals to catch an exclamation from his listener, and to return it with his own dry laugh. His narrative was simple, succinct, unambitious in phrase, and had the charm of seeming to be thoroughly enjoyed by him who spoke it, as it usually was by those to whom it was spoken.

Our friend of the Record Office heard all Galt's stories with a philosophic incredulity, never expressed, but pictured in a face to which nature had lent no charm. Evening after evening such converse went on. After sunset—I think I see him as I write—in came the secretary, retiring to his drawing-room after an evening stroll. He was the last wearer of the willow hat; a blessed, but not a becoming invention: on the same principle a gambroon coat was assumed in summer. He neither smoked, nor talked, nor played at cards, so that the copious talk of Galt seemed to be designed by his good angel on purpose for his amusement. Then in came Galt; his proud stature looking prouder in the little drawing-room, beneath the door of which he was almost forced to stoop. He was then in the vigour of intellect, and full of hope—that hope which circumstances so cruelly quenched. He was full of schemes

—the Canada Company was then his theme; and he had schemes without end. All these he unfolded to his silent friend, who rarely grunted an approval, yet was too canny to differ openly. Galt was just discovering the *saleability* of his own powers; he was penning "The Ayrshire Legatees." "I can write a sheet a night," said he, addressing his friend. I remember the cold "humph!" which sounded to me very much like "the more's the pity." Our secretary did not approve of rapid composition.

Mr. Galt was at that time a married man, his lady being a daughter of Mr. Tilloch, formerly editor of the *Star* newspaper; one of the papers of my grandmother's class, dull and proper, and suited to elderly country gentlemen, who looked for it by the post as eagerly as for their pipe and spectacles.

His wife and three sons formed the domestic circle of Mr. Galt. His occupation had been that of a merchant; but he was, at this period of his life, full of the Canada Company. His mind was eager, energetic, and sanguine; his habits, without being exactly extravagant, were those of a man who abhors small calculations, whilst he is planning great schemes: his whole mind seemed absorbed by those plans which produced to their framer nothing more profitable than "Lawrie Todd," and brought infinite vexation, and a perplexity and trouble which destroyed him.

I dined with Galt once when he was in this place of projects. He had then left Lindesay Row; and the slow companionship of his taciturn friend of the Record

Office was exchanged for the bustling intercourse of men of the world,—men conversant with the money market, directors of companies, secretaries to institutions, stockbrokers, and the like. What an uncongenial sphere for the writer of "The Entail!" yet Galt managed to play his part ably. He had a vast share of good-humour; he had a ready reply, a business-like precision, and the true Scotch hospitality characterised him as a landlord. He then lived in a house in Tavistock Place, next the chapel: it consisted of two floors only; and the study, dining-room, drawing-room, were all *en suite*. I was struck by the versatility with which the novelist, who has touched the finest chords of the heart in his "Windy Yule," the masterpiece of "The Provost," could adapt himself to the actual business of life. After his company were gone, he sat down, I am told, to his literary labours. There never was a greater discrepancy between any man's actual inclinations and positive pursuits than those of Galt at this period. Happy had it been for him had he followed the biddings of Nature, and brandished his pen only as the novelist or biographer! It served him in little stead when applied to the jobbings of a company.

There is a period in every man's life when he is what his kind friends, and especially his old friends, who have been stationary in life, call "set up." Heaven knows, I write not this in any bitterness, neither do I mean to apply it to Galt. He was sanguine; he enjoyed the eminence to which he had raised himself:

but his was not the insolence of success, although it might be esteemed the elation of prosperity. His disposition was kind and cordial, and he appeared to feel a perfect reliance on the good-will of those around him.

But the aspirations of this sanguine spirit were not realised. He went to Canada and one heard of him and thought of him with about the same interest as one gazes upon yon far-off planet, whose orb, as I close my study window-curtains, shines above the dark tips of those fir-trees. When I remembered Galt (to carry out my simile), it was to think of him as one whose radiance illumined another sphere, and probably never more would shine on mine. I mixed him up in my mind with furs, and Washington Irvine, and the "Rough Notes" of Sir George Head—and the Canada Company was to me a mystery and a puzzle that I could never make out. Galt came home, and was located in Brompton. I went to see him.

Now, Brompton is the grave of London. Its two syllables speak of illness too severe to admit of further removal, and which takes the middle course of going out of London, but not getting into the country. Its familiar two syllables represent the assemblage of the half sick, and the half ruined, and the half respectable, and the half broken-hearted, who people its squares, and utter their plaints in its groves—for Brompton is a pastoral place. It has its St. Michael's Grove, its Brompton Grove, its Hermitage; an exquisite poem

by L. E. L. has been written upon the single grave of its churchyard. It is altogether a place very poetical to hear of—very, very prosaic when seen.

Barnes Cottage, where poor Mr. Galt lived until his final removal to Scotland, stands close upon the broiling, dusty, sunny road, called Old Brompton Lane: it is a cottage in a consumption; for the symptoms of decay strike you forcibly, even whilst you admit the existence of something pleasant, and even comely, in the object presented to you.

You enter a porch, and come at once into a low, but not very small parlour—one on either side of the door. A passage intersects the house, and a glass-door at the end shows you a gravel walk, and a spacious, sunny garden, all garnished with gay flowers,—roses more especially,—and furnished with fruit-trees. It is a refreshing little spot; and you come upon it instantaneously from the dusty road; and you seem to be, comparatively speaking, emerging into the country from the hackneyed road out of town.

I visited poor Galt here,—yes, he was *poor* Galt; for the world had dealt with him much in the same manner as it usually deals with the sensitive and the uncalculating. That Canada Company!—but I abstain from invective, and forbear the language of party.

The room was, I will not say indifferently furnished—it was "*ready* furnished:" the phrase speaks for itself. Everything was complete, but dingy, dark green, and manifesting the transient character of our sublunary state. But the windows looked upon that

gay, hot garden; and wall-fruit, of which the hospitable tenants of the cottage made you partake, hung upon the walls; and sweet-peas bloomed, and mignionette grew in broad patches, and scented the very chamber in which you were shown.

Mr. Galt was seated in a chair as I went in. He did not rise. He looked older; he was stouter; there was no indication of ill health: but he gave me his left hand, and pointing to his right, said with a little quickness, "Perhaps you heard of my attack? It has fallen upon my limbs; my head is clear."

I sat down, and we ran over the events of the few years which had intervened since I saw him last. To me they had been but little varied by what the world calls adversity; however—but why touch upon themes with which the stranger intermeddleth not? To Galt they had been a season of severe struggling, hard business, irritation, oppression, injustice; so he said—and I never inquired. I was content to pity. I was certain there was nothing to condemn. I was sure—and was afterwards assured that my conviction was right—that Mr. Galt had consulted his own interests far too little, and that of his employers too much. That he had been disinterested and indefatigable; and, as the disinterested generally are, had been treated with a severity and illiberality, which, being the work of a company, could not be visited upon any one individual. Such are my impressions: they may be erroneous, for the evidence on which they are based is *ex parte*, and is extracted from a pamphlet circulated by

Galt among the few sterling friends whose constancy and affection remained to him in this most desolate and trying period of his life.

It was truly to be so described, for it was *not* a period of certainty, but one of harassing suspense. Day after day might his tall, bent form be seen, aided by servants, entering the city omnibus, as it stood in that hot, dusty road by Barnes Cottage. On he went, to argue, and wrangle, and press his claims with hard-headed men, and to return disappointed and irritated to his easy chair, and to the unmeasured sympathy of the best of women and of wives. His elder sons, meantime, had gone as settlers in that very country the prosperity of which their father had foreseen. One only remained at home. Where is he now — the bashful, blooming boy, with an eye just like his gifted father's, and a head full of poetic fancies? Is he too a settler on those cold plains? Has not the name of Galt one representative in Old England? — Alas!

I spoke of the few friends who tried to cheer the breaking heart of the poet in his retirement at Barnes Cottage. Among these was one whose kindness contributed much to soothe the wounded spirit, and to appease the cravings of that which merited not the name of mortified vanity, but which might be termed a consciousness of unjust desertion by the world. *She* came — I dare not pen her name — still beautiful, always gifted, better than all, ever kind, in all her loveliness of delicate apparel, in all her gems and splendour. *She* sat by the sick man's easy chair, the

soft air blowing about her costly veil and other appurtenances, as she stooped; whilst in the lane stood her gay coach at the door, its proud steeds pawing the ground, its five balls and coroneted panel attracting the surprise of many a passer-by, as he contrasted the lowly entrance with the sumptuous vehicle. She came pitying and sorrowing, and ever and anon leaving behind her something to solace the dark hours which succeeded the return of the omnibus from the foul city. She knew, gay and gorgeous as was her attire, she too knew how the world's censures eat into the heart. Kind, beautiful, yet erring being! The world casts you from it—in some moments of reflection, for come they *will*, when the heart challenges the memory, and regret and sorrow bedew your eyes with tears, know that you comforted the infirm man in his infirmity—that you left him soothed and thankful—that *you*, of all the gay dames who were wont to smile upon his happier hours, forsook not his decline.

In the decay of his fortunes, Mr. Galt, whilst pressing what he believed to be just claims on the Canada Company, applied for, and, I believe, was promised a pension, which was never paid—perhaps it was never granted. Day after day his health declined, and repeated strokes of palsy took from him first the use of one limb, then of another—then the mind showed slight symptoms of weakness. Fearful and inexplicable change! With what solicitude did the faithful partner of his fortunes watch over his shattered frame. How she sought to persuade herself, even while his speech

faltered, his memory betrayed him, that the limbs only partook of the general failure. How self-deceiving is affection! And she, humble, religious, self-distrustful, how important had she become to the sick man in his hour of trial!

He bore it manfully. The disease, which produces such irritation of nerves and temper, was combated in *that*, its worst form, by *him*. He never complained; though in the vigour of life, when, not much more than fifty years of age, his strength was prostrated. There were moments of intense anxiety when he sorrowed for *her* — when he thought of his sons, and hoped they would fare better than himself. There were moments of despair; but the general tenour of his journey, as it neared the valley of the shadow of death, was resignation and fortitude.

The last time I saw him he called upon me alone. He came, even in his low and feeble state, and got out of the cab which brought him, and entered the house leaning upon the arm of my servant. He could scarcely walk. I never shall forget the face of horror of a friend of mine, who whispered to me as he entered, "Who is *that?* — I have seen him elsewhere." I answered by re-introducing him; it was, indeed, requisite. Yet, when seated, Galt retained little appearance of disease. His complexion was clear, his articulation was then restored, his eyes sparkled; it was when he arose and walked that one saw that the axe had been laid to the root of the tree. He got out again with difficulty, my servant supporting him even until he was seated in

the cab. It drove away, and I never beheld him again! I called at Barnes Cottage — a large board "to let furnished" warned me that I had called too late. I stopped, nevertheless, some time in the house, opened to me by one of that crew who "take care of houses," and take care that they shall not be let either. I stood for a few moments before the easy chair which Mr. Galt used, and heard the story that he and his had gone to live (that is to die) at Greenock, where Mr. Galt's sister resided. I strolled into the garden, into which I had sometimes supported him with my arm. I could remember the very tale he had told me when last we had sat in yon harbour, now overgrown with the clematis which had been heretofore subjected to discipline. I sat down and sorrowed for him beneath the branches of a large mulberry tree. It was unlikely that I should see him more. In his prosperity he had been nothing to me; but the adversity of the last year had established a claim upon my feelings.

As I returned through Old Brompton, and gazed up at the house where Canning had lived and died, and passed the substantial house in which Faith, visiting the earth, had appeared in the form of Samuel Wilberforce, — as I looked upon the small house with a garden, in St. Michael's Grove, in which Letitia Landon had bowled her hoop in one hand, and created verses at the same time; when I thought of the fate of all these bright meteors, I came to the conclusion that the history of the gifted is a mournful history, and that its moral is not taught to the heart, but wrung from it.

Think of Canning, the high-toned instrument which the rude touch might in one instant put out of tune, the delicate fabric of his nerves so susceptible that those who beheld him on the eve of some great exertion could see him tremble as he tried to join in ordinary converse! "I never in my whole experience," observed Sir James Mackintosh once, "saw a man endowed with such over-abundant sensibility as Canning." His agitation, on a first introduction to any person of whom he had a high notion, was that of a timid woman. When one remembers this bright and sensitive being oppressed with responsibility, badgered by a party, sinking under the weight of incipient disease, expiring, whilst a nation looked on and mourned, one is fain to confess that the annals of genius have their pages of sorrow — more touching than one likes to confess; that there are martyrs to the world as well as to religion or patriotism.

The decline of Wilberforce was less harrowing than the brief and awful illness of Canning. Yet Wilberforce had his sorrows; his were the sorrows of a philanthropist grieving for the bad, mourning the prevalence of evil. His own private affairs, irretrievably injured as they were by his sacrifice to abolition and to principle, seemed like an episode in a life all given up to public weal, and to the advancement of immutable principles of justice and mercy. To descend to a far humbler theme: who knows what were the throbbings of the overcharged heart that ceased to beat on Afric's shore when L. E. L. expired? Who can tell what was

its last pang — what the final impression of anguish or of terror?

To return to Mr. Galt. A sister offered him a home, and he retired to Greenock. He lived a year after his return to Scotland. I almost fear to say how many shocks of palsy I heard that he had received; they were reported to be so numerous. Meantime he felt acutely the dependence, never remembered by the kind and generous being who sheltered him from care, as she had hoped, in her house — and his letters breathed the anguish of his mind. A friend*, his physician, obtained for him from the Literary Fund the sum of 50*l.*, all the public assistance ever given to one whose works had delighted thousands: thousands, who knew not that the hand that penned those volumes was shrivelled and powerless, and that the intellect whence they emanated was gradually becoming benighted. Much, however, was in mercy spared of that once powerful mind, to respond to kindness, and to console her who now mourns the lost and the gifted amid the forests of Canada. A long interval of helplessness, increased feebleness, a mournful conviction that medicine could do no more, prepared the sorrow-stricken man for the peace of eternity. A kinder, a less complaining spirit never sank to rest. His sons are thriving in Canada — his wife has followed them there. His works alone remain behind him. Few, perhaps, now read "The

* The late Dr. Anthony Todd Thomson.

Provost," and "The Entail," and "The Ayrshire Legatees." As novels they are defective, but they contain scenes and passages as unparalleled in their truth and pathos as the works of Morland and of Hogarth in painting. I should like to see a book entitled "The Beauties of Galt" — selections from his works — choice morsels in which the hand of a great master may be seen, his weaknesses being kept out of sight. Alas! how few modern writers there are whose works may be preserved as a whole. How many who have left passages of extreme beauty — isolated *morceaux*.

CHAP. VI.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.—MRS. SIDDONS.

As I recall to mind the eminent men whom I have known, a form arises at my beckoning, stands beside me, leans on my chair. He is not old; the shrunken limbs, the hose a world too wide, the feeble voice, the wreck of a face, the wreck of a mind, denote *not* age. It is not age;—can it be care? Yes; age has come before its time. Beneath that brown wig, assumed in compliance with a bygone custom, happily discarded (for grey hair and bald heads are now recognised), small, regular, handsome features—eyes that want nothing but light—a somewhat formal cast of physiognomy, are turned towards me. The last traces of fascination still linger on that countenance at times; but there are hours when all is confusion, all is darkness there. Peace, and oblivion to the memory of his failings!—honour to the shade of him who has bequeathed to us—not the remembrance of errors, of which none ought to estimate the extent until they have known the temptation,—but the ennobling stanzas of "Hohenlinden," "The Soldier's Dream," "The Mariners of England," the "Gertrude of Wyoming," "The Pleasures of Hope."

Thomas Campbell, whose image memory thus calls to my mind's eye, was the son of a Scotch clergyman somewhere in the north of Caledonia, and *where* his future biographer will doubtless inform us. Of his early fortunes I have heard much from one who knew him well, when both the poet and my informant were climbing up the ascent to fame, with very small refreshment by the way. But the stern self-denial of the Scot knows no obstacles; and he can, like the camel, subsist upon food at longer intervals than other creatures. Campbell went first to college at Glasgow; but at the time that his old friend knew him he was transcribing, for a consideration, in a writer's office in Edinburgh. There, also, he studied medicine; or rather he attended the medical classes, and supported himself by his transcribing, whilst he was pursuing the path to science. Resembling, in this respect, another great man, Sir James Mackintosh, he had, in choosing medicine, mistaken his avocation. Sir James Mackintosh also began life as a student of medicine, and obtained the title of Doctor. It is reported of him, by a brother debater of the "Speculative," in Edinburgh, that on one occasion he made so excellent an harangue on one of the subjects which were assigned to him, that the assembled listeners were entranced with wonder. "Mr. Mackintosh," observed one of the judges who was present to him, "you have mistaken your profession: it *should* have been the law." The student took the hint, and the result is known to have justified the comment. Mackintosh, nevertheless, retained, all his

life, a love of medicine as a pursuit; he not unfrequently spoke of it to practitioners in terms of scientific accuracy; and he was fond of conversing upon the subject.

And, what may and will be asked by English readers, was the Speculative Society? It was a debating society, established in 1764, composed of selected students of the University of Edinburgh, and an admission into its choice number was deemed an honour, and has always since established a man's pretensions to a degree of attainment and of reputation in his day. The list of members in the annals of the Speculative comprises the great names of Dugald Stewart, of Robertson, of Sir Walter Scott, of Jeffrey, Brougham, Francis Horner, Lord Dudley, Lord Lansdowne, and countless others. In its meetings ambition was excited, talent developed, and character strengthened by commerce of mind with mind. Many an orator, who has since delighted and edified mankind, was trained in the Speculative.

Campbell was poor; but poverty in Edinburgh, at that period, did not entail the solitude of the shabby lodging, or the exclusion from all that was cheerful and intellectual. In its suppers, now declining even in Edinburgh, the Scotch of the metropolis had retained a custom, perhaps originally borrowed from the French, whose language and whose cookery are still to be traced among a people as different to their Gallic neighbours as the stately head of Benvenue is to the Champs Elysées. After a day of writing, varied by attendance at

the medical classes, Campbell was in the habit of visiting at the house of a lady, then a milliner in Edinburgh. Smile not, reader;—this milliner was indeed a lady of an ancient Scottish lineage, and of undoubted respectability. It was, in former days, by no means uncommon for English families of respectability to place their portionless daughters in business; for education was not the profitable avocation which it has since become. In Scotland it was still more frequently the case. The pride of even noble Scottish families, strange to say, was not compromised by having relations in business. Even I can remember wedding-dresses being made for a female relation of mine by the Misses D——, who were connected, and that closely, with the noble houses which glory in their ancient name; and these excellent and respected ladies were visited by their proud kinsfolk, and regarded with a consideration that did credit to both the great and the humble. A word more about milliners. "Among all these," observed a noted lady "in business," addressing one of my sisters, who had chanced to pass the door of her workroom, and was looking at a group of poor girls, busily plying the needle, "I should say there are not *two* who ought to be here. Some," she added, as she passed on, "are the daughters of English clergyman, others of officers; four of them, and the best, and most patient, are the daughters of high proud Scotch families."

To prove my point still further,—a lady, whose name stands high in the literature of our country, was obliged, by adverse circumstances, to place her young

daughter in one of these establishments of business. It was in those times thought the best thing that could be done; and some sacrifice of means, and abundance of fortitude on both sides, was necessary to accomplish it. For some time everything went on well; but the ordeal was too hard—bad food, late hours, loss of air, of happiness, of home, broke the young spirit. The mother —whose name I will not tell, for those live whom the narrative may pain—came to London, in time only to see her child expire. Within my own sad experience, —smile not, my sister, who may read this retrospect,—but my own experience could paint a picture scarcely less touching. Remember you, my laughing nieces, the fair Scotch girl who came, blooming as yourselves, and recommended to your notice, should she "set up for herself," to a certain fashionable *modiste* —I forbear to name her—in this metropolis? The girl was innocent, and humbly gay; and there were some who, knowing her family, and pitying the decree which sent her here, thought it no derogation to ask the poor child to a sober Sunday's dinner. It was not *every* Sunday that *she could come.* Some Sabbath days she lay in bed, from downright weariness of spirit and flesh; others, she worked till noon. One lady, of ducal rank, was in the habit of sending orders for a dress on Saturday, to be ready by four o'clock on the following Sunday. *She* must not be displeased; Annie, for so was the simple one called, was detained to furbish the dowager. Day by day her bloom lessened, then went wholly; the clear fair skin became transparent.

One Christmas day she came so late, that my sister had ceased to expect her. When she did arrive, a burst of tears relieved her spirits; she had scarcely been in bed that week. This is but one instance of the melancholy truth — pardon the digression, and let us return to the Madam Carson of Edinburgh,— the stately, money-making, respectable Miss ——.

Her young ladies were all of the class which I have described, and among them were some of her own young relations. Guarded by this excellent lady, around her supper-table, therefore, were assembled, after the day's work was done, not only some of the handsomest *belles* of the Old Town, but the cleverest among the students of Edinburgh College, and amongst them the animated, though obscure, Tom Campbell. I could specify other names; but I am the sexton of literary men, and meddle not with them until they are dead.

Among the company collected around the supper-table of Miss ——, Campbell was a favourite. His spirits were high, his wit sparkling, and he was good-looking, and kind-hearted. An old associate, to whom he took a fancy, was the first to discover this treasure of poetry within the mind of the medical student. To this friend, also a visitor at the house of Miss ——, Campbell showed the first skeleton of "The Pleasures of Hope." It was, in that form, a very short poem; but the friend to whom it was read discerned its excellence. "And now," said the young poet, "whom shall I get to publish it?" The answer was a promised

introduction to Manners and Miller, and the poet was persuaded to try his fortune *there.* A fortnight after the poem had been presented to these eminent publishers, the friend to whom I refer met Campbell walking over the North Bridge. His hands were in his pockets, his head thrown back; he was humming a tune pretty loud; his whole appearance denoted an unwonted elevation of spirits. His friend stopped him with the polite interrogation, "For heaven's sake what's the matter with you, Tom? Are you mad?" The young poet looked at him as if he were dreaming, and, clapping his hand on his coat-pocket, exclaimed, "I've got it!"—"Got what?" rejoined his friend.—"Twenty guineas!" answered the poet with an expression of rapturous pride, "twenty guineas for my poem!" And he resumed his walk, or rather strut, down the bridge. "But," argued his friend, following him, "though I am very glad to hear of it, I think it is too little." Campbell, however, informed his kind adviser that, although the payment was only twenty guineas then, he was to make considerable additions to the poem, for which he was to have more—he did not know what. But eventually he obtained, I think, but will not say certainly, the sum of sixty guineas, when all was completed!

I cannot follow Campbell's struggling fortunes throughout. These sketches of his early life are "retrospections" of many a fireside talk with one who was Campbell's contemporary, and who knew him long before he was known to fame. Some years afterwards the

same friend visited the poet when he was transplanted into a very different sphere. Campbell was then private secretary to Lord Minto (himself a poet), and Lord Minto lived in Piccadilly, in the house now inhabited by Miss Burdett Coutts. In this house the poem of "Lochiel" was written;—the framework of that noble poem was also seen by my friend. The rhymes were written first, and the lines filled in afterwards, the poet singing them to a sort of cadence, as he recited them to his wondering friend. Again the Scottish suppers were renewed—the hearty friendships of the north throve even in the colder soil of unsocial London. Why London is unsocial it is difficult to say, though everybody says it. Every one pines for visiting on easy terms; but no one makes any attempt to facilitate the matter. Invitations at a month's end seem like insults upon our sublunary state, our uncertain health, our prosperity, which may make wings to itself and flee away; but, nevertheless, who likes unexpected visits? Extempore tea-drinking is esteemed a liberty; and, if you venture upon it, the whole of the visit is apt to be occupied in reflections whether or not it really *is* acceptable. A vain, though well-meant, attempt was made, last season, to revive the simple, enjoyable supper at nine o'clock,—the audacity of scolloped oysters and the atrocity of bottled beer were even perpetrated in some high quarters; but the Londoners would not understand it. They have no notion of anything that is not in every way full dressed. With all our luxuries, the luxury of easy visiting is not to be

ours; we must be half ruined to be in society at all; and we are growing obtuse to the *real* vulgarity of all the display and expense which we thrust upon our tables, and mingle with our nocturnal meetings.

The days are gone by when great men would walk quietly in to sit a few hours without disturbing the family arrangements. They are now wholly devoid of the simplicity and freedom of the last century. Intellectual society becomes, year by year, more and more scarce. Is it luxury that has frightened it away?

The traits which I have given of Campbell are borrowed; they are the result of the experience of others. What I shall henceforth write of him will be my own recollections of the poet. They are bound up with many a different theme in the memory of past years. But I do not mean to be sentimental: as a proof of it, my first theme is — Hammersmith.

There is a row of houses in Hammersmith bordering the river, and, many years ago, detached from all other such places. It formed a sort of terrace; the habitations were small, and suited to bachelors of moderate means, or to single ladies, or to the interesting class of widows. Each house had a long strip of a garden, which was divided from its neighbour by a low wall, generally covered with privet or honeysuckle. The gardens did not go directly down to the river, but all communicated in a walk common to the whole terrace. From this walk steps descended to the water; and you might fish up eels; or take a boat at high water; or

sleep, or read, or count the minutes, if you had nothing else to do.

This part of Hammersmith was then "out of town;" and those who are somewhat my juniors can ill conceive how pretty and sunny the terrace was — as quiet as you could wish; the gardens fragrant with flowers, and bird-cages hung out beneath the drawing-room windows, and a great deal of boating and flirting was going on between the denizens of the terrace.

They mostly knew each other, for the common walk at the end afforded opportunities of introduction. My impression, however, is, that the houses belonged to one owner, who was particular in keeping the inhabitants select. The place exists still, I have little doubt. I have not seen it this thirty years. I dare say it has deteriorated greatly. Clothes, I have every reason to conclude, may be hanging out to dry on the privet hedges; cigars taint the walk at the end; I will engage there are tea-gardens near; steamboats with incessant bands passing to and fro; Lord Mayor's barges; rowing matches, and the eternal green veils of the Thames filling up the intervals.

There were no steamboats then; all was serene, except the plashing of the occasional oar (one gentleman in the terrace had his boat), and the gentle triumph of the anglers, or the warbling of the gay canaries in the sun.

There was one family, and one only, who mingled not with the community of the terrace, but who, though unknowing, were not unknown. This was Thomas

Campbell, and his wife, and son, his wife's sister, and his wife's sister's husband.

They lived in a house at the end. Mr. and Mrs. Weiss, or Wiss, Mrs. Campbell's brother-in-law and sister, were sometimes seen; Mrs. Campbell and her husband never. Mrs. Wiss had been, and indeed then was, beautiful. I speak from report—as a boy, passing a few dull weeks of vacation with some dull old friends of my family, I was much more taken up with the beauty of a gudgeon than with the good looks of any woman; but I heard Mrs. Wiss spoken of as a beauty, and I solemnly hope Mrs. Campbell was also. Could she be the "Caroline" addressed in those beautiful lines ending, "To bear is to conquer our fate," and be plain? I will not believe it.

Young as I was, and seated all day, with the bearish inconsiderateness of boyhood, on the very centre of the middle step, with my great feet on the lower one, my stupid eyes fixed on my line,—thoughtless as I was, I had experienced a momentary enthusiasm over the line, "And man, the hermit, pined,—till woman smiled." I had learned some pages of "The Pleasures of Hope;" I was fired with a wish to see the author of the poem. To justify my chronology, I must here say that "The Pleasures of Hope" was published, I rather think, before I was born. Campbell himself said to me, one day, speaking of a gentleman who wished to pay him a compliment, "And what do you think it was?" said he. "The man had the barbarity to say to me, 'Mr. Campbell, *my* father courted my mother out

of "The Pleasures of Hope."' And this," added the poet with one of his ineffable looks, "from a person *far* past the first bloom of youth, I do assure you. Cruel, was it not?"

Well, therefore, and I look around me, as I pen the truth, upon great grown-up men, who will not believe me—well then, I *had* read "The Pleasures of Hope," but in vain did I try to catch a glimpse of the writer. He went into London early, every day, and came home late. Once or twice I saw, in the dusk of evening, a short and somewhat set figure, seated in a boat, rowed up to the stairs at the other end of the terrace. I ran for my life; the neatly chiseled profile was all I could perceive—it was to be sure, Mr. Campbell, but he moved quietly into the garden, and I had not the courage to watch him even into the house.

The terrace days were long over, and I was a dining-out character, and had formed several of those friendships and connections to which it has been my pleasure to refer, when, one evening, an acquaintance who was going to the same ball with me, said to me, "Will you call for me as you pass through —— Street? I dine there—I will not keep you five minutes,—do come." I went; I waited more than five minutes; but just as I and my hackney-coach had resolved to drive on, out came my friend: a gentleman came with him. Said my acquaintance, "Have you room there? We can just set Mr. Campbell down. I knew—I was sure," he added in a whisper, "you wouldn't object—'tis Tom Campbell." Of course, I said all that was civil.

Mr. Campbell jumped in, he was then middle-aged and active, and we drove on. Those were the days of patience and slowness—the coach proceeded slowly. Mr. Campbell and I sat side by side, my friend opposite. I was again disappointed, for Campbell never turned his face to me—I saw nothing but the faultless and beautiful outline of his profile. He must have been, on a small scale, a very good-looking man. His figure was at that period neat and tight—he then wore the wig, and a very candid wig it was. His manner was a little quick. He had, I was told, been the life of the party which he had just left, telling capital anecdotes, and flattering and being flattered by youth and beauty. I remember one trait which was very unlike the generous feeling of his general character: the remark seemed to escape him in a moment of petulance. "Do you know so and so?" asked my friend, alluding to a gentleman (a writer) whose company they had just quitted. "No," replied Mr. Campbell hastily, "I never have anything to do, if I can help it, with second-rate authors."

My interview, if it could be so called, in the gloom of London and oil-lit lamps, led at that time to no acquaintance; and I set the poet of all modern poets down as one whom I should never know; and report whispered that his days were overcast with the deepest gloom; his wife had died, his son—but let me leave such themes of sorrow to hands which will, I trust, touch gently the chords that tell of so much woe.

Meantime, I had not lost my interest in Campbell.

In London I met him not. The world makes no allowance for the failings of the gifted. I cannot agree in the opinion given by a great authority, I believe Lord Brougham, who expresses himself in his Essay on the Life of Burke, in the "Edinburgh Review," to this effect; — speaking of Burke's debts, "We are bound," he says, "to afford to a man of genius just as much excuse for his pecuniary embarrassments as we give to others, but no more." I quote from memory. I am very sure that I do not give the turn of the expression; but of the meaning and substance of the passage, I am certain.

It is a stern decision: the diction of a man who does not know pecuniary distress. I venture to differ from it: not that I am by any means disposed to give to genius all the latitude on this, and other points, that she is ever so ready to take; but I beg humbly to plead for her this, that she ought to have some one to look after her affairs. There is that in the imaginative mind that revolts against the details of every-day economy, and it is the disregard of these details, more often than greater offences, which beget difficulties and ruin.

From this species of trouble Mr. Campbell, if he suffered at all, suffered from his good-nature to others, by whom the liberality of his conduct was taken advantage of to his detriment. But this, endowed as he was with the pension originally conferred by Charles James Fox, was *not* the *dark shadow* which followed his course through life. It was one which the righteous might have ventured to pity, the rigid to forgive. It was the fatal effect of a sensitive mind too severely tried;

it was the remnant of old conviviality, the sources of which were poisoned, and were converted into self-indulgence. It was an evil, a curse—resisted when too late—destroying by inches the fine intellect—eating into the constitution, sparing nothing save the kind, afflicted heart. It was a vice—yes, I grant it—a vice produced by long anxiety, by companionless care, and increased by the neglect and desertion of old friends who might have solaced, have warned, have controlled. It was a vice which society, disgusted and sorrowing, visits once, and never withdraws her ban.

But, in despite of it, the integrity and honour of the poet stood unsullied to the last. He was severely dealt with by an exaggerating world.

At length, after hearing little of Campbell for some time, I not only saw, but heard him. Who does not remember that dinner of the Literary Fund over which Prince Albert presided, supported, on the one hand, by the Marquis of Lansdowne, on the other by the Duke of Cleveland. There was, on that occasion, a confluence of literary men, never before, I fancy, assembled in that dingy room at the Freemasons', where antiquarian cobwebs must, I should conceive, have accumulated over the heads of tens of thousands of statesmen, philanthropists, poets, and clergymen, public singers, and waiters. It was in that room, where, on a platform, I had beheld Edward Irvine, the idolised preacher, touched by the eloquence of Brougham, give his watch in pledge of his subscription to the cause of Anti-slavery,—his deep voice echoing

up to the very gallery, his eye (both never accorded) sparkling already with that fearful light which seems a prelude to the darkness of the tomb. It is there that I have mourned with the accomplished Lord Caernarvon over the monstrous cruelty of the dog-cart; and my blood has boiled at the recitals in the Cruelty to Animals' meetings. It is there that Sussex was, and Cambridge is, perennial chairman. It was there that this far-famed literary dinner took place. I crept in among the humble. After the dinner there was every species of eloquence. Prince Albert's foreign, neat harangue; the Marquis of Lansdowne's happy address; the Duke of Cleveland's remarks—all went off well. There we had episcopal oratory—the impassioned harangue of the Bishop of Norwich, the graver speech of Archbishop Whately,—we had the earnest appeal of Lord Ashley, born to serve and to save, and the elegance of Lord Dudley Stuart. Then we had a redundance of literary merit and renown. Hallam at the head,—Lord Mahon —Moore—I leave out a long list which I might enumerate,—James—Lever—Ainsworth—Croly—Campbell. I leave out in this summary sketch an untold number of county members and scientific professors; but take them all for granted.

Prince Albert had modestly begun, and elegantly ended *his* part—the great and the mitred had played theirs. The Historians of England had been said and sung about—compliments were flowing as freely as all small coin is passed and returned, when the awful "Gentlemen, charge your glasses. Mr. Campbell and

the Poets of England, three times three!" rang upon my ear. Then spoke Hallam, and he spoke admirably. He referred to the long intimacy with Mr. Campbell which he had enjoyed, an intimacy of forty years' standing—he eulogised the genius in his deep tones—he spoke not long, his voice ceased, and, amid a general silence, Mr. Campbell got up to return thanks. Again I saw that small and regular face—again the well-proportioned features were before me; but the features were pinched, the face joyless, the eyes heavy. The sight was painful. He began to speak, and he spoke well. His voice, though not strong, was clear, and the intellect awakened, as it seemed, at his bidding, and, in the few short sentences which he was permitted to utter, the fancy and wit of the Campbell of yore might be observed. Suddenly, he broke down—he repeated himself—his compliment to Hallam was reiterated—the nerves were shaken by the effort. Oh! he should have been soothed, encouraged, cheered. Will you believe it? The people around him, as the Poet of Britain strove to regain the thread of his harangue, coughed him down, groaned, checked him in every rude and opprobrious manner. A burst of cheers reproved the brutality, and Campbell rose again to speak; but it was too late—feeble, long retired into private life, shattered in strength, and perfectly able to comprehend what construction was cruelly and erroneously put upon his failure, the words fell in confusion from his lips. After a moment he ceased to speak, seemed to recollect himself, and sat down. In a few minutes I saw him

going away; he was deeply wounded by the rudeness which might have been spared to his feelings—he went out, and returned no more.

Then Lord Mahon stood up: he had to propose "the Poets of Ireland, and Mr. Moore;" but in so doing, and ere the footsteps of the poet had probably passed the threshold of the house, he diverged from Ireland to Scotland, and passed a graceful and beautiful eulogium on Mr. Campbell. It was well done, but it was heard not by him whom it most concerned. When, during our after acquaintance, I told the poet of it, he said gently, "It was very kind. They might have let me alone; had I had five minutes to recover myself—but who could stand such a noise? And then my friend Hallam, too," he added, a smile passing over his varying countenance, "why! how old he makes me! Why could he not say 'thirty' years? But he's so chronological."

But a short interval was there between my acquaintance with Campbell and his last removal to Boulogne, where he died. I saw him, towards the close of his residence in England, surrounded by the friends of his happiest days—Rogers among them. I saw him happy with her to whom he was an indulgent, liberal father, his niece. Her hands tended his death-bed, her kind voice cheered his decline. He was not desolate. The heart that had felt so deeply for others, was not chilled by the measured services of the hireling. A friend, a clergyman, hastened from England to administer the last solemn sacraments for the dying. Campbell sank

into his grave, humbled, penitent, grateful, believing, and hoping. Never did a more benevolent spirit rise from the prison of humanity to the freedom of the just. His errors were not of the dark, unsocial kind; no callousness followed these errors. Those who knew him intimately loved him to the last. Great is the sentiment, so hackneyed that we prize it not—

> "No farther seek his merits to disclose,
> Nor draw his frailties from their dread abode,—"

and greater, because it was penned by one who, less than most men, required the indulgence which he gave.

I have described Campbell's early abode where I first saw him — let me draw a little picture of his last, in this country. Behind Arabella Row, near Buckingham Palace, is a small square, in a sort of corner, as if, modestly, it meant to be unknown. But no! It bears the high-sounding appellation of Victoria Square; a figure of Victoria, with a globe in her hand, graces the centre of the square. In this retired spot Campbell lived. I remember, when I last visited it, and found the house closed, the poet gone, I augured that he would return no more to his native land. Perhaps no British poet has ever written (I do not mean to expatiate on his genius) so unexceptionably. There is not a line for a reviewer to cavil at in his earlier and more finished poems. I can remember "Gertrude of Wyoming" coming out, and its being much criticised. But who can criticise it now? Who can read it without a painful sense of the deterioration of poetry in

our own day. Campbell was, I have heard, very careful and fastidious. His smallest sonnets were touched and retouched with a pruning hand. He was one of the few poets who had no reason to complain of public ingratitude. The pension to which I have referred was double the usual amount, and the poet rose to the height of his fame after the publication of his first work.

The prose works of Campbell add little to his fame: it rather makes one melancholy to think that he should have been induced, or condemned, to write a page that one could not read. His "Life of Mrs. Siddons," although generally reckoned poor, pleases, nevertheless, from its absence of pretension, its simple exposition of the greatest actress in her everyday dress. Those letters in which she breathes her anxiety about her daughter — the darling of her noble heart — the doomed one who was afterwards snatched from her mother by consumption — are deeply affecting. The chain of narrative was supplied with a gentle and friendly hand by Campbell. We see the gifted mother journeying from place to place, assuming every possible form of human woe, carrying it into the very hearts of those who heard her, whilst her own throbs with a sorrow unutterable — a consuming, constant care. When the blow came, it was well borne; but, in the midst of her proud lot, the *woman* within her was chastened. Her triumphs elated her not — her pure spirit was never sullied by the dangers of prosperity. The mother's heart was wrung, and whilst the world

worshipped, she was humbled and sorrowing. How singular were her fortunes! I knew a lady who frequently saw Mrs. Siddons after her performances, and who assured me that the great actress was often led off the stage after her impassioned acting in the "Gamester," or any of her favourite parts, in strong hysterics. This is related of one to whom all the world attributed a want of sensibility; for the world is always suspicious of those who have the power, either in literature or in their dramatic performances, to work upon its sympathies. How erroneously does it judge! How wittily, yet how untruly was it said of Byron, "that he had an imagination of fire playing around a heart of ice." Byron had real and deep feeling, deeper than those who cast him from them. Yet, like many other men of sensibility, there were moments when he chose to appear something worse than the stoic, and little less than the brute. The night after Spencer Perceval's death witnessed, I have heard, one of these melancholy exhibitions of pretended indifference. Were we to judge Byron, as the world often judges men of genius, by that one trait, what should we say of him? And, to descend to a lower parallel, a gentleman of nice ideas, who dined in company with Mrs. Siddons at Sir Walter Scott's, and saw her eat very heartily of boiled beef, was not very likely, on going to the theatre afterwards, to enjoy her acting of *Belvidere*. "The whole audience were melted into tears," he said to me; "but, for myself, I could think of nothing but the dinner of boiled beef." I experienced the same disgust in watching Pasta, at a

supper after the opera, devouring oysters, whilst the air "Di Tanti Palpiti" rang in my ears. It was also highly distressing to think of the expiring Malibran calling eagerly for "porter." But these things must be endured and forgotten if possible.

Never, however, was there a being who *less* let herself down to ordinary life, when off the stage, than Mrs. Siddons. By nature she was a queen. I saw her, indeed, only in the decline of life, when she had bidden adieu for ever to the stage. She was then visiting at Guy's Cliff, near Leamington, and, as an equal, staying with the very family with whom as a girl she had been domesticated in the humble capacity of a lady's maid. I knew a gentleman whose mother visited the family, and who could boast of having been carried in Mrs. Siddons's arms, when an infant, through the walks of Guy's Cliff. How stately must the fine creature have looked, as she perambulated the woods of that exquisite place! The house was then comparatively small, and, seated on the cliff, overlooked the widened stream of the Avon, until the view was terminated by one object —a mill. Often have I stood, in winter, to gaze upon the frozen mill-dam, and to revel in the sight of the icicles, reflecting the beams of the noon-day sun. The honoured inhabitants of Guy's Cliff, noble in descent, nobler still in their virtues, discerned the merit and the talents of Miss Kemble;—she became their friend. Her bust, and that of her brother, are to be seen, sculptured by the Hon. Mrs. Damer, among the other objects of interest in a place where the eye is riveted,

the heart is touched—not by the fabled feats of the gigantic Guy—not by the holes which he scraped with his nails in the sandstone—not by the traces of the great and gifted who have been there,—but by the portrait of the young and accomplished son of those who were the friends of Mrs. Siddons. That picture can never be forgotten. It is the self-drawn resemblance of the young heir of Guy's Cliff, the painter of several promising pictures. He died in the bloom of youth, abroad,—leaving to his parents the remembrance of their loves and hopes, and one infant daughter to perpetuate his memory.

Amid these recollections stands the bust of Mrs. Siddons; beside it, like a Roman senator, that of John Kemble. I am glad that I lived not sufficiently in his day to hear the little gossiping stories which were, I doubt not, spread about of his coldness and his avarice, but which "are interred with his bones." I am glad I never had the bloom of my adoration of him rubbed off by contemporary slander. I can think of him now as the *Doreforth* of Mrs. Inchbald, who drew that character from John Kemble. She must, I am convinced, have been in love with him; it was not in her nature to help it. And what a picture drawn by her dull biographer, Boaden, of the Kemble family, without knowing it! Mrs. Siddons, after her rejection at Drury Lane, dutifully ironing her husband's shirts; John Kemble studying to prepare himself for the Roman Catholic priesthood; and herself—the "Simple Story" in her desk, rejected also—presenting a sin-

gular compound of literature and love, romance and meanness, beauty and untidiness.

I had heard much of Mrs. Siddons from my earliest childhood. Some aged relations of mine were fond of talking of the days when St. John's Wood *was* a wood, and when Lisson Grove was a grove. In those times, there was an old Manor House in St. John's Wood, which the usual course of changes in this mundane state had reduced to a farm house. The farmer, or his wife, let off some of the rooms into lodgings. The old couple, to whom I have referred, were in the habit of taking apartments during the summer months at the Manor House. It stood quite in the country, and, as fate would have it, old Mr. and Mrs. Kemble, the parents of the immortal trio, (for, though last and least, the present survivor was a great actor, and is an accomplished man,) had lodgings there also. I have heard my relations say—and they were no ordinary judges, —that there never was a more perfect gentleman than old Mr. Kemble; nor a finer woman, nor a more excellent being, than his wife. Both were singularly handsome.

Mrs. Siddons had by that time given up ironing her husband's shirts and was in the zenith of her fame at Drury Lane. Her proud mother was always talking of "Sally;" and occasionally the magnificent "Sally" swept across the Manor House garden, and bowing her lofty head, paid fleeting visits, coming in her own carriage, to her parents. Mrs. Kemble was very desirous of showing "Sally" to her friends and fellow-

lodgers; day after day she promised to do so; but Mrs. Siddons never could or would wait for the display. One morning, my old lady friend heard an altercation between mother and daughter on that very point. Mrs. Kemble persisted. "Well then," replied the haughty Sarah, "Madam, I wait your pleasure." The mother retired, and stationed her friend in the hall, where she could see the immortal Sarah returning. In a few minutes Mrs. Siddons came out, *preceding* her mother—a fatal blemish in manners. She moved, my friend said, as if she would scarcely deign to touch the earth; and, with a distant courtesy, passed on. But her dress, her walk, her grand beauty, then in its prime, were long the theme of my old friend's talk; while the words "Madam, I wait your pleasure," were given by her in that deep, distinct tone which none who had ever heard Mrs. Siddons could fail to recognise.

I had seen that splendid specimen of humanity in her principal characters, when it was my fortune to meet with her once, and only once, in private. Her acting had left that grand but indefinite impression on my mind which the dim remembrance of a solemn cloister, or the awful fall of an avalanche, would make upon my memory; but I could neither recal nor criticise its details. I recollect seeing her perform *Elvira* with one hand bound up (from a cut finger); but even with only one arm, her action was perfect. Under a very different aspect did I behold her in the year—— in a Leamington ball-room. Who remembers the first introduction of quadrilles in place of country-dances, or,

as they began to be called, "Kitchen" dances? Alas! I do: many do, if they would own it. I was passing through Leamington, then a very humble and much despised half-sister of Cheltenham (fashion united to hypochondriacism, their common parents,) when I was enticed into attending one of the balls. They were weekly meetings, and were usually indifferently attended.

There was an admirable master of the ceremonies at Leamington in those days. I fear he is dead;—could he die? Could anything so polished, and so perfect, be mortal? He had the blandest smile, the most bewitching teeth, the finest legs, an incomparable bow, a temper on a patent principle, and mind enough to acquit himself of the functions of his difficult office. He was handsome, too, had been in the army, walked well, and, in short, displayed the perfection of all outward graces.

This gentleman was standing with an anxious, embarrassed face as I entered the ball-room. The first set of quadrilles—that set which has gone on as if by a spell ever since—was just formed. Mr. H—— had had some trouble in making it up. As he looked at the dancers, and wondered how "some would get through it," his attention was called away to a party just entering the room. I noted not the rest; but the name of Mrs. Siddons, as she was introduced to Mr. H——, arrested my gaze. Mrs. Siddons appeared then about sixty years of age. Her form was shorter than I had expected: it was large and heavy; but her walk

recalled the *Catherine of Arragon*, as I remembered her, to my mind. Her face was—shall I acknowledge it?—very plain; the features, which I had heard my father describe as (he knew her at seventeen) so perfect, were magnified and marked: it was a caricature of beauty. But her arm had still its roundness, and her manners wore a sober grace suited to the matron. She was led to the top of the room, and seated among the aristocracy of the neighbourhood—her natural sphere. And then began the quadrilles—the first attempt in Leamington. I shall never forget them. The ladies did well; but the gentlemen!—they ran against each other, turned the wrong partners, became confused, and hot, and shamefaced, and ended in a total mental aberration. Fancy a set of fox-hunters threading their way through La Poule!—fancy the Pastorale! The sitters-by were already in convulsions; when a little man, an attorney of the neighbourhood, came forward in that monologue (what else can I call it?) in Pastorale. He ran, he capered, he pirouetted;—the creature had had lessons. I turned for an instant to look at Mrs. Siddons, and the story of the boiled beef received an additional illustration. She laughed until she cried. The tears were absolutely rolling down her cheeks: she almost went into hysterics, and was obliged to retire in order to recover her composure. After this, fancy seeing her in Mrs. Haller!

Whatever may have been the troubles of her life, in its noonday prime, her end was peace. "Never," said an excellent clergyman, who had read to her and

visited her during her last long period of decline and seclusion, "never did I attend a more humble, a more hopeful Christian than Mrs. Siddons." Noble and excellent creature!—whose purity no circumstances could sully, whose greatness no pressure of early adversity could crush.

CHAP. VII.

WILKIE. CHANTREY.

It was the *Season!* What a rush of ideas into the initiated mind does that word produce! The *Season!* No longer does the blooming beauty of eighteen, as she utters that word, associate it with the school-room, the long task, learnt with disgust and repeated with apathy, out of Thomson,—the season, be it winter or spring, summer or autumn, is to her only the season. The fashionable dressmaker hastens off to Paris as she utters the word, and comes back to her mingled offices of subserviency and oppression,—to her courtesies and smiles, her "charming figure, madam," to her customers, and to her dark doings in the far off workroom, where, bowed down over the costumes of happier creatures than themselves, young forms are to be seen; many, as the night draws on, scarcely able to pass the needle through the work, their eyes closing over the interminable flounce which is to deck the figure of some nymph as she flies down the dance of which they hear, and, perhaps, dream, but are never fated to enjoy. It was the season! How noisy and gay are the streets. How mad and hot the world appears,—how the very horses seem to have imbibed the general ardour, and to

dash onwards, as if conscious of conveying youth, loveliness, and rank, to their destination! Oh! are there any in that gorgeous array of carriages which flock up Regent Street, who think of the bye-lanes and dark alleys of life—who remember the work that *must* be done, wrung from that class we proudly call free, yet treat as slaves,—before all this matchless splendour, this every-year increasing and astounding luxury can be compassed? "Can it be expected?" answers the spirit of pleasure, as he catches, with a sneer, the sound of my whispered inquiry. "'Tis very sad, very shocking, to be sure," mutters the dandy, sticking his glass into his eye, as he sits down before a superlative dinner, and looks contemptuously at the elaborate luxuries as they are placed in array before him by gentlemen in white waistcoats and cravats. "'Tis horrible, upon my honour, to know that so many poor creatures are starving; but our fretting ourselves about it won't mend it."

I take this hint; and turn from revolting and unprofitable reflections to the remembrance of a season, some twenty years ago, in which things went on much the same as they do now.

Who remembers those few seasons in which the "Earl of Grosvenor," as he then was, allowed the public, with a certain restraint of tickets, a certain degree of wholesome difficulty (without which nothing will pass for real coin in London), to see his gallery? Yes; and you were allowed to loiter there as long as you pleased, within reason: a powdered footman handed

you a card, which served as a catalogue, and you threw yourself into a luxurious, pillowy chair, and gazed, if you wished it, upon the gigantic women with large arms and enormous shoulders, of which, by Rubens, there are some magnificent specimens in the Grosvenor Gallery.

It was a compound sort of pleasure that one felt in walking through these rooms, especially, as it was my lot to do, singly, and without the drawback of an admiring cousin, who might have insisted upon being in raptures, to trouble one's reveries with a little leaven of the common-place. You felt that the very entrance within the court-yard, prefaced *then* by a heavy wall, lifted you up above your former self. The very notion of a court-yard in London inspires a sensation of nobility, above, about, around you. How it may have acted upon weak human nature in those days when most of the nobility had detached residences, walled in, and around, and guarded by a porter's lodge, I know not. I can only answer for myself, that I trod respectfully over the flag-stones of the Earl of Grosvenor's court-yard; felt myself ennobled by the air of nobleness around me; found myself a greater man than I had been when in the street; and was charmed into a great notion of self-consequence by the quiet respect of some half-dozen of very handsome lacqueys, one of whom humbly solicited that I would leave my umbrella in the hall.

The rooms were full of youth, beauty, fashion, and

noise. Those were the days when the women wore bright light colours, and gay and flowery they looked in a large assemblage of morning dresses. I hardly think we have gained in general effect by so much black as is assumed in the present time. But, perhaps, to the middle-aged the world naturally assumes a more dingy hue than it did twenty years ago;—a proof of coming age, and I hasten to discard it from remembrance.

Behind a forest of ringlets, and acting as a dark background to a bright object in a picture, stood a group of three gentlemen; one young, one of rather more than middle age, one decidedly old. They were in low, and, on the part of two of the group, earnest conversation; they stood before one of those cabinet pictures,—I now forget the master,—of which it requires to be an artist to comprehend the incomparable merits. The old man's manner was quick and argumentative; his dark eye was lively to a degree; he seemed to be a favourite of the other two, for they both referred to him incessantly,—nay, to be a favourite with every one, for, as many a fair one passed to and fro, a white hand, ungloved for the heat, would be extended, and a soft lingering smile accorded to the old man, who returned it graciously, but without *empressement.* I was struck with his countenance, it had so much the expression of genius, so much more than his *works.* I could have sworn he was a poet, but that some phrases, the terms of art, met my ear; and at

last, the salutation, "How are you, Northcote?" gave me the desired information. "Surely," I reasoned with myself, "he has mistaken his vocation; with that eye of fire, he never should have been the painter of so many tame, lifeless pictures." But my curiosity then turned upon this—who where his two companions?

The tall and elegant man who stood beside him, had as little the appearance of an artist as ever man had; neither do I think, except when his fine face was in the repose of reflection, that it gave, in any great degree, the impression of intellect. His physiognomy was mild, varying, and gentleman-like. Every line, every gesture, every glance of that countenance seemed to denote the man of high-breeding, and of a polish, as much the result of elegance of thought, as of good company. Yet, he was the son of an innkeeper in a country town. Fortune, when she made him a "Sir Thomas," seemed only as if she were restoring him to his birthright. I saw then before me, disappointing all my true English notions of "blood," and my habitual belief in the power of tracing descent from countenances, the courtly, fascinating painter of the Duchess of Richmond, a picture worthy of the loveliness which must have inspired the pencil with no common skill; I beheld him on whose palette the colours of the "Little Red Riding Hood" were then fresh,—the future historiographer (forgive the pompous word) of the Allied Sovereigns. Ah! he looked much more like the companion of George IV. than a mere artist. He looked more like the star of the west than the

plodding artist. And yet, though it seems idle to say it, there was no difficulty in reconciling Sir Thomas Lawrence to his works. One naturally strives to do so, in all cases. One strives to see in James, the lofty annalist of the Field of the Cloth of Gold—in Marryat, the humourist who could create the Jacob Faithful and the Peter Simple. One strove, and not unsuccessfully, to find in the wrapt countenance of Mrs. Hemans, the spirit which breathes itself in the "Records of Woman;" but never was such a research more completely repaid than when it went to compare Sir Thomas Lawrence with his productions. His genius was not of the bold, romantic, and daring nature; it had more delicacy than vigour, more sentiment than romance. He was the Carew of painters, susceptible to all that was lovely and graceful, and quickly uniting the intellectual with the physical charms. And, as I turn over the pages of the now slighted poet, (the gentleman of the bed-chamber of Charles I.,) I find my comparison (hazarded, at first, I own,) holds better than I thought; for the poet was a degree *too* susceptible, so was the painter; the poet drew his living and exquisite pictures from the highest classes only—so did the painter. The poet was a creature of drawing-rooms and courts, and would have perished in any other atmosphere — so, I guess, would have done the painter. Lawrence, like Carew, was fitted only to depict the loftier spheres, he could not have portrayed a vulgar woman. He could only "incarnadine the rosie cheeke" of that large class with whom he was so closely intermingled during the

greater portion of his life. I have sometimes been surprised, on comparing the portraits of Lawrence, with those of Sir Joshua Reynolds, to perceive, that while they both depicted the same class, they drew from a very different species of women. No doubt each artist conveyed an adequate idea of the aristocratic fair of their own times. Both were celebrated for being gifted with the perception of that which constituted the lady. How different, then, must these gentle dames of former days have been to those of the more recent, yet still by-gone period of Lawrence's reputation! The female portraits of Reynolds give us the true notion of good-breeding, modesty, high respectability, with the ease of rank. His ladies, be they in a morning costume, or in the full dress of the day, are modestly attired, and there is a general air of decorum and refinement which charms, as well as the exquisite features and rich tresses of the high-born beauties.

"I'll make your eyes like morning suns appeare,
As mild and faire;
Your brow as crystal, smooth, and cleare,
And your dishevell'd hayre
Shall flow like a calm region of the ayre."

Such is the impression which the pencil of Reynolds gives. He has bequeathed to us the memory of the graceful matron, and of the feminine young creature just emerging into maturity in the higher ranks. Lawrence has only left us the woman of fashion. With some exceptions, such as the Duchess of Richmond,

and Lady Peel, and I doubt not many others, although I have not them at present in remembrance, his ladies look a little like demireps, with their moderate quantity of apparel, and with that peculiar expression, half bold, half winning, which he has given — or which he, perhaps, could not help giving — to his female portraits. They are exquisite, certainly; and, I know it is treason to say so, and that were I to dare to read this at my fireside, a torrent of censure would overpower me; and I know that Lawrence is thought, *par excellence*, to have been the painter of the *lady*, and so he was, but not of the lady as she was in the days of Reynolds. Let me make one more exception, that portrait of the Princess Charlotte, painted six months before her death. It is now at Claremont. It hangs, if I forget not, (I visited Claremont during the first burst of that universal lament which rang throughout England; which closed our very churches in black, and called forth, on the night when the cold remains of that lovely and royal creature were deposited in St. George's Chapel, whilst the old and feeble of her family looked on, responsive services, and tolling bells, and the funeral chant, in most of the parish churches in England was heard,—I *then* visited Claremont). There I saw that exquisite effort of Lawrence's art. There was none of the demirep air there. The face is delicacy itself, and has, indeed, a look of ill-health, perhaps to be accounted for merely on the score of the young, ill-fated princess's situation; perhaps, it might be an indication af a doom already sealed. A black

mantle is held over the form, which seems enfeebled, and bears no longer the majestic air of the usual portraits. No coronet of roses decks her brow; but her hair, in careless curls, falls upon the fair and scarcely tinted cheek. The attributes of the princess are lost in the lovelier, though homelier characteristics of the woman. With what mournful interest must her royal husband (once hers alone) look upon that, the last portrait of that matchless being, the noble offspring of the ignoble, when he visits Claremont. I have heard that he desires to be alone — and is sometimes long alone in that chamber in which imagination can paint the agony,—the young mother's hopes,—their blight,— the heroic submission, — the look of fond affection, — the first love of that warm heart, — the whispered tenderness on either side, — the hands clasped in each other; then, the chill, — the pain, — the ominous faintness, — the consternation around, — the suffering of a few short moments, — the farewell, looked not uttered, —the *death.*

I have wandered sadly from Lawrence, yet he is always, surely, peculiarly interwoven with one's early recollections of the royal family. He seemed as if he had been bred up among them, and could have painted George's and Charlotte's, I should think, blindfolded. He never, however, gave the Prince Regent half the graces that report assigned him: he made him stiff, a pseudo-military dandy, tailorish, with a touch of the Bond Street of old in him. I have no doubt but that Lawrence was restricted and interfered with, and his

true powers cramped by the melancholy vanity of the once "glass of fashion."

Lawrence lingered not long amid the group at Lord Grosvenor's. He looked with a seemingly careless air around him, but there was no *real* frivolity in his deportment, nor I believe in his heart. I scarcely knew him in society, but I have heard of him as a gay rattle, inclined, or rather accustomed, to flatter pretty women,—a habit just as natural to him as rubbing up carmine when he should have put only lake on his palette; not indisposed to flirtation; a man whose conversational powers disappointed you, and who seemed to be a true man of the world. This was the usual report. I met him, circling in lighted drawing-rooms, never staying long anywhere, with that habit which London men acquire of going from one house to the other, and, probably, enjoying nothing but the expectations with which they leave one party and go off to another; becoming incapable of rest, yet yearning for quiet, in which there could be interest,—requiring excitement as naturally as the glass of claret after dinner, yet becoming at last, unexcitable,—known to all, intimate with none,—and, perhaps, tempted to exclaim with Lord Dudley, "There is not a house in London into which I can enter, without invitation, to ask for a cup of tea," mingling every night with scores, perhaps—hundreds of people, yet living essentially alone. This, I will engage to say, was the case with Lawrence, and is the case with many, especially of his class,—the highest order of

artists and painters; for they have every inducement *not* to marry. Invited, petted, put on an equality (and actually entitled to more than equality) with the great and the fair, even middle life, in which they have alone the right to look for permanent connections, seems coarse to a taste which may be said to be more vitiated than refined, when it loses the clear judgment of the different merits of different classes. But so it is,—and how difficult it must be to a man who is smiled upon by Ladies Blanche and Ladies Caroline, to come down to the nether sphere of some solicitor's fourth daughter, the three elder ones looking above him; or, how impossible for *him*, supposing he makes the descent, ever to bring her up again to the sphere which habit, perhaps, rather than choice, have made essential to his tastes.

I thought Lawrence a worldly man,—I have thought many men so: the history of Theodore Hook has taught me another lesson,—and a lesson it is. What a picture it is, painted by no common hand, which that essay on the life of Theodore Hook in the "Quarterly Review" presents! I could not recover it for days; perhaps, it might speak *home*. Ah, no! but it spoke *home* to many a prejudice and dislike; it told me how little we can judge of those around us,—how scantly we should lavish the words worldly and heartless, phrases, I observe, very often used by the heartless. How little would one have dreamt that feelings so intense, a remorse so poignant, and attachments without the sanction of principle, lay beneath those con-

vivial qualities which, like the gay white flower, the little anemone, which spreads its leaves on the bosom of the waters, covered a depth of crystal treasures beneath! And, I doubt not, that happier in many respects than Theodore Hook, with consciences less seared, and a lot less harrowing, many of the men whom we deem heartless, have suffered from wasted affections, or from that worst sense of desolateness which follows us through a crowd.

Sir Thomas Lawrence, although I met him butterfly-like culling sweets everywhere, and although he seemed to belong to the world, was not, altogether, of *this* world. There was one from whom his best affections never swerved,— from whom the baubles of life could not withdraw him, and to whom his heart twined with an enduring, and lively affection. This was his sister, the wife of a clergyman in one of the midland counties, and to her, and to her family, the accomplished artist was ever the same,—a liberal, true-hearted patron; he was glad and kind when he could snatch himself from the scenes of pleasure to mingle in the circle of a country parsonage.

Such were my subsequent impressions of the man upon whom I looked ignorantly, admiring the animation of that fair and fascinating face, but never dreaming that I was gazing upon the idol of the day. Presently, whilst his elder companion still talked, and the younger one addressed, falteringly, a few hurried sentences to him, Sir Thomas seemed to remember an engagement. He touched the hand of Northcote,

smiled kindly at the third person in the group, and hastened away.

I walked on likewise. The rooms were thinned, and there was only a little crowding before that wonderful cow of Paul Potter's, — a picture truly extraordinary, — but I never could make out why it charmed so much, except that it depicted what everybody understood. When I returned towards the first part of the gallery, or rather, as they *then* were, suites of rooms, I saw the gentleman who had been talking to Northcote and Lawrence standing before a Dutch picture. I could only see the up-raised foot of one of the boors dancing, so closely was the unknown planted before it; and I should not have been struck with the appearance of the unknown had I not observed him with the two celebrated men whom I have mentioned. I looked at him on that account with some interest.

He was a tall, thin man, with square shoulders, and a bend, rather than a stoop in his figure, of about thirty-three or more. His dress was extremely plain, of a serious, old-fashioned cut, but it was very neat, very good; and in those respects he was contrasted with the careless air of Northcote, and the grace and beauishness of Lawrence. He looked highly respectable; but had I not seen him in such company, I could not have declared to what class he belonged. Most professions have some distinctive mark: the clergyman has his peculiar tie of cravat, his black coat, — the apothecary somehow always looks like an apothecary, — you may know a barrister by his air of assurance, — the dancing-

master by his walk, — the musical *artiste,* I abhor the affectation of the name, is now proclaimed by his moustache, — but I defy you to discover the artist. Of course, however, the unknown was an artist; and, indeed, his fixed attention, his very "perusing," as it were, of each countenance in the picture, would have revealed his love of art. Yet there was nothing inspired or inspiring in his countenance. In the first place, as to complexion, it was not sallow, it was not fair; but it was of one general pale hue, that seemed as if the blood had been all let out of his veins. I never saw that passionless countenance even flushed. His forehead was high, and almost white, and denoted great original delicacy of complexion; his hair was inclined to golden. I do not mean red; it was yellowish in part, and darker at the roots. Long, and marked eyebrows, dashed too with the golden tinge, surmounted large, full, cold eyes, which looked as if they looked not, yet kindled when the speaker was warmed through — and that did not happen every day — with a variety of expressions. The features were regular, but of no high cast; the face long, serious, and honest; yes, I never knew a being so without guile, as he to whom that cold, reserved, exterior belonged.

There was a certain dignity in his figure, — the height, — the careful attire, — the absence of all pretension; and, although there was no stamp of extraordinary intellect in the countenance, I remember being struck by the deep, undivided attention which he was

giving to the picture. Groups were coming and going, — laughing and chattering went on; there were other objects, one would suppose, equally attractive around, yet still was he set glued there: in that complete abstraction there was mind; and I judged that he must be an extraordinary man, — and he *was* an extraordinary man.

It was David Wilkie. I gained that intelligence from a friend whom I met a few minutes afterwards, as I was going out; and I returned to look again at the celebrated, and, as it was said, self-taught painter of the Blind Fiddler. By this time, Mr. Wilkie had moved his position; his large grey eyes were fixed upon a Corregio; he looked as if he were worshipping — not a soul was near him — he saw nothing but the arm of the Virgin, which, he afterwards assured me, presented, in that Corregio of Lord Grosvenor, the finest specimen of colouring he had ever seen. He gazed for many moments, sighed, as if in despair, and returned to the Teniers. I lingered near him — I saw his eyes again riveted on the Festivities of the Dutch Boors, who seemed almost to move, and in whom there is an individuality of character which you never see repeated in that extraordinary master. I marked the reluctant determination to tear himself away — the coat was buttoned up — the effort — the watch taken out — the resolution — at last, he muttered to himself, "Ah! there is nobody like Davie Teniers!" The words were spoken — a slight sigh was breathed — and he walked gravely away.

It was my happy chance afterwards to know Wilkie, the only one of that remarkable group with whom I became actually acquainted. Let me testify to his worth, his high principle, his unalterable integrity, and singleness of heart; or, rather, let me not waste so much time, for no one ever seems to have doubted all these attributes. He was a true Scotchman: prudent, persevering, jealous of his reputation, yet incapable of endeavouring to enhance it by one unworthy method; he was conscious of his great powers, without, at that period of his life, one atom of vanity. I heard that, in after-days, he was "set up," as people say; but I cannot say I agreed with that opinion. As a young man, he was, I should say, the most modest of human beings, ready to listen to suggestions from any visitors to his painting-room, lending a patient attention to that which must often have been wearisome, yet not courting remark, nor ever assenting to the justice of a criticism unless he really agreed with it. He was never, I believe, heard to depreciate others; indeed, he seldom spoke of the works of contemporaries, in which he showed the delicacy of his taste, and the discretion of his cautious countrymen. To Sir Thomas Lawrence he became as enthusiastically attached as it was possible to be; for the coldness of Wilkie lay upon the surface of his character. He ever spoke of Lawrence as his best and kindest friend, and on *his* works he was often heard to descant with the most lively admiration. Lawrence had lent some portion of his vast influence

to accelerate the sure progress of Wilkie up the steep ascent to fame.

When I knew Wilkie there was still a steep ascent to climb, not perhaps to fame, but to fortune. His gains were at that time moderate, because he painted so slowly, so carefully, and viewed his own productions with so fastidious an eye. For the ambition of this good man and admirable painter was of the highest order; it was not confined to ephemeral fame; it would not be satisfied with all that money, and being run after, could give. He had a visionary hope of being able to realise the possibility of modern art emulating the ancient glories of the painter's studio. He sighed to walk in the steps of "Davie Teniers;" he longed to penetrate into the secrets of Rembrandt's colouring; to imitate that power over light and shade which that master perfected. He tried every possible means to discover in what mode the grand effects were produced; for this end, Wilkie had a number of little dolls made and set up, in various costumes, and placed within a sort of framework, or house, into which he could introduce the light in various directions. I saw the progress of the whole. It was his hope, by this experiment, to attain the power of imitating the different effects of daylight in the morning, at noon, afternoon, and evening. Pieces of gauze were stretched along an aperture at the extremity of the little structure, and these were doubled as daylight declined. Wilkie was very sanguine of deriving much improvement from this process; "but still," he said, "I never

shall attain the full effect of being out of doors, so wonderfully accomplished by some of the Dutch painters." I witnessed his patient, indefatigable efforts, and could trace the effects of the experiment in several of his least popular pictures.

Wilkie, every one will allow, committed a fatal error in departing from the study of simple nature, and of that description of life of which he had been an early observer from infancy. Like Sir Walter Scott, his mind had been insensibly imbued with the habits and characteristics of his country, and could not readily take up any other. Sir Walter's antiquarian tastes, indeed, enabled him to be almost as great upon English ground, in the olden times, as in Scotland, but he never could have written a modern English novel; and Wilkie, when he wandered in Spain and Italy, produced masterly sketches, and worked them into noble pictures; but he never excelled, nor even equalled, the Wilkie of the Rent Day. I should say that he was the Dickens of Painters, save that his pictures are always devoid of caricature, which is the besetting sin of Dickens, and which will, in spite of his transcendant powers, always render him inferior to Fielding, and, I dare to say it, to Goldsmith. Wilkie's early paintings combined truth, humour, pathos. Who can look upon the Rent Day, unmoved? Does it not speak volumes to the heart? Perhaps one may call Wilkie the Crabbe of Painters, but that Crabbe has a coarseness, a strength of passion in his portraitures, which Wilkie has not displayed.

In conversation, Wilkie was wholly devoid of humour; he was elaborate in explanation, and slow in perceiving the meaning of others; but I speak of a period of his life when he had seen little—before he went abroad at *all*—when his fame was high, but personally he was little known, when he lived in his art, and for his art, and that in a small remote dwelling somewhere near Phillimore Place, Kensington.

When I first knew Wilkie, his home had recently been enlivened by the arrival of his venerable mother from Scotland. With the dutiful feeling of a true Scot, who, whatever he may do with respect to his other ties, has the filial affections strong within him, Wilkie, as soon as competence enabled him to offer his mother a home, wrote to her, to come and live with him.

"Daavie" (with the *a* long) "wished as much," said the old lady to me; "and I couldna say nay." And never was painter more blessed in a picturesque mother. The widow of a Scotch minister, Mrs. Wilkie had all the characteristics of that respectable, humble station; the sedate, simple manner, the neat, inexpensive, becoming attire, the unpretending manners. Her face—I see it now—had a sagacity which showed that my belief in hereditary gifts had found another confirmation. It had the remains of comeliness; then her speech, that gentle sort of Scotch which falls not harshly upon the ear, but gives great piquancy even to the most ordinary remarks, completed the interest which this lively, and yet venerable old lady inspired.

It was an experiment, bringing her from her quiet manse, in some secluded village, to the neighbourhood of London, and, what was more, to fresh habits, different hours, the predominance of a different faith around her; but I believe the excellent lady lived in comfort, and died—under her son's roof—in peace.

To his sister, Wilkie was also devotedly attached; and when I talk of the coldness of his manner, I must be understood as considering it, as I have said before, merely manner. His affections were concentrated on few objects, and were proportionately intense. Why he never married, I cannot divine; he would have made a patient, constant, irreproachable husband; but the lover's part—the first act in the comedy of courtship, would have been, I fear, indifferently played. He was totally devoid of gallantry, though deferential and friendly to those ladies whom he esteemed. I do not believe he had an atom of poetry in his composition, nor one grain of imagination. It was a labour to him to conceive a picture; yet he never painted until that conception was made out. I think he made ten sketches, at least, of the celebrated Waterloo picture; and we discussed them all. Fine as the picture became, it seemed, at first, not to be in his way; he was intensely anxious about it; thought of it incessantly, and dreamed of it, I believe; and slowly, inch by inch, matured the design in his careful mind.

But to return to the sentimental question—why he never married? Men who offer homes to their mothers and sisters, themselves being upwards of thirty, some-

how rarely do. Is it that the strong fraternal feeling makes men fastidious, or that they wait till the mother who has blessed the home of duty is no more? Waiting for anything—even for one's dinner—mightily diminishes the relish for it when it comes. Well! I cannot explain it. At first, perhaps, a Scotchman's reason might—the want of means. At the very time that Wilkie was painting the Chelsea Pensioners, he could not make more than 800*l.* a year; he took, I think, eight months to that picture; the price paid for it was moderate; he used to say, "I *cannot* hurry. Portrait-painting is odious. I *cannot* paint portraits, otherwise I might be a richer man." I well remember a dash of irritability in his manner, as he showed me the sketch of the Duke of York, of whom he painted a full-length cabinet portrait. "I had sad trouble," he observed somewhat peevishly,—an expression rarely to be applied to Wilkie,—"with the duke's face, his mouth especially; he is a little underhung." He looked at me inquiringly, as I gazed on the *too* faithful picture. Wilkie was too true for a portrait-painter. He had the habit of copying to the letter. If he wanted to paint the smallest item in the economy of a household, it was sought out; and I believe each of the multifarious articles in the Blind Fiddler was separately studied—I think I do right in applying the word—for the picture.

Apropos of that picture—let me mention a circumstance which shows at once the observation and memory of the painter, his reserve of character, and fidelity in portraiture.

Mothers are much more fond of talking of their sons' gifts and virtues than wives are of their husbands'. Old Mrs. Wilkie loved to be asked questions about "Davie." I inquired one day, whether he had early displayed much talent in drawing.

"Aweel," said she, "I mind that he was ae scrawling, and scratching, I did na ken what, and he had an idle fashion o' making likenesses and caricatoores like of all the folk as came. And there was an auld blind mon, Willie, the fiddler, just an idle sort of a beggar-mon, that used to come wi' his noise, and set all the women servants a jigging wi' his scratching and scraping; and Davie was ae taking o' this puir bodie into the hoose, and gieing him a drap o' toddy; and I used to cry shame on the lad for encouraging such lazy vagabonds about the hoose. Weel," pursued the old lady, "but ye maun ken he was an ill-favoured, daft sort of a creatur, that puir blind bodie, weel eno' in his way, but not the sort o' folk to be along wi' Davie; yet the lad was always a saying to me, 'Mither, gie's a bawbie for puir blind Willie.' This," she added with a sigh, "sir, was when we lived at the Manse."

I listened eagerly to the simple commencement of the anecdote. The homely manse — the shoeless women-folk — the blind intruder, welcome from charity, but not too often, — and the young student of nature, delighting, almost unconsciously to himself, in the picturesque, were before me. The lively countenance of the minister's widow glistened as she proceeded

(She was unlike her son in face; the father must have owned those large, cold eyes.)

" Aweel, sir, they told me—it was mony years after the puir blind body was gane hame, sir—that Davie had painted a grand pictur; and he wrote me to go to Edinburgh to see it; and I went, and sure eno' there was puir old Willie, the very like o' him, his fiddle and a'. I was wud wi' surprise; and there was Davie standing a laughing at me, and saying, 'Mither, mony's the time that ye ha heard that fiddle to the toon o' "the Campbells are coming."' "

Wilkie never could paint ladies—scarcely women. He had no perceptions, I think, on the score of female beauty; he liked the sedate, long face, and I have sometimes thought it one disadvantage of his pictures, that his females all resembled each other. The fact is, he was often at a loss for subjects. Too economical to have hired sitters, in general, he drew upon the willing kindness of young friends, in whose countenances he contrived to see beauty, where no one else saw more than comeliness.

In manner, Wilkie was, at this period of his life, constrained, shy, not difficult of access, for his humility made him think himself honoured by almost any notice, but difficult to know. Of this you might be sure,—you might not know him well, but you never would be misled by him in any one conception of himself. The same integrity which made him paint the Duke of York so strictly and disobligingly to the life, pervaded all his character. He was not ready in conversation; read

few books of amusement, except Walter Scott, whom he adored of course, but whom he gravely censured, as men of conscientious minds without imagination do, for falsifying history,—or producing what Lord Brougham called "history bewitched." Wilkie rarely spoke of himself or of his own pictures, except in his studio, and there, indeed, the palace of his art, you found him unaffected,—but seeming to separate himself from his fame, and apparently unconscious of it. To those who loved and understood pictures he was a most interesting companion,—but not unless one had that love deep within the heart. I remember with delight a long day spent in Dulwich Gallery; the Watteaus there attracted Wilkie's close attention; he was riveted, and saw nothing but these—his cynosures. I found him, as I walked about, always in the same spot. "There is so much air," he said, as if speaking to himself,—and he mused for half-an-hour as we quitted the gallery, and retraced our steps along the quiet village to the inn, to find our horses. Wilkie talked a good deal that day; he had a habit of saying "You know, you know,"—the trick of a shy man, who was not gifted with native fluency of tongue. His accent was a mild Scotch, when conversing with English people; but, in seeing him at his ease, you beheld the Scotchman complete, and the broadest accent and the true idiom proclaimed that the days of the manse and the blind fiddler were not forgotten.

I do not think that, generally, Wilkie associated much with his brother artists: in fact, he was always

absorbed in the study of his great art; and he was, besides, in the early period of his career — I knew him not in the later — so strict in his notions, that I believe he would never have maintained an acquaintance of whose principles he entertained a doubt. Religious, correct, unimpeachable, he was; nevertheless, sociable where he respected, and, like many men of the same stamp, he loved the quiet fireside better than the crowded drawing-room. It was by the tea-table, in company with one or two whom he liked, that he unbent, and threw open the recesses of a heart full of simplicity and goodness.

I respected — I confided in him. I admired, no less than the true genius, the unfeigned humility of the painter. I always felt that he would be a great man,— that he *was* a great man; but, if I were to say that Wilkie inspired me with the enthusiasm which I have felt even for inferior men, I should deceive. No; it was a thorough approbation and esteem, not an engrossing friendship, which he inspired. He had no weaknesses, few faults, and but little expression of sympathy; and then, that complete self-abandonment to an art which is to you only a resource, separates man from man. Wilkie's studio was his wife, his friend, his all; his pencils were his children; Rembrandt his Jupiter; Watteau his Juno; Teniers his household deity. This intense application to one soul-inspiring theme makes a great painter, a great sculptor, but spoils a friend, — at least, to my mind; for I suppose I am as vain and selfish as other men. His application was, indeed,

intense. At length, his health gave way—I know not the precise time when, but somewhere, as far as recollection serves me, about the year 1825. I was shocked when, after an interval of some months, he came to see me. His pale face was ghastly; his eyes looked as if they were made of partially opaque glass; he stooped; and a deep melancholy sat upon that thoughtful brow. He told me that the physicians feared there was some organic disease forming in his head.

"I feel," said he mournfully, "as if I wore an iron crown. They tell me it is work. My palette, my paint-brush are laid aside. I must travel. Indeed," he added a few moments afterwards, his cheek growing paler and paler, "'tis of no consequence their bidding me not to work. I cannot even think."

We dined together; he took no wine; spoke rarely; but tried to resume his usual style of conversation. I saw that a deep disappointment, adding to the languor of ill health, was weighing down his spirits. Here was a man rising to the very pinnacle of celebrity, thrown back into the shade, as it seemed likely to prove, by a sudden and fatal incapacity even to that which was his second nature.

"If I paint one half-hour," he said, holding his hand to his head, "I feel it here."

We parted for some years. Wilkie was ordered to travel. I went on, plodding on my common-place journey through life, and heard now and then that he was better. Our acquaintance, by some mischance,—perhaps my negligence, perhaps (but I don't think it)

his coldness,—was not resumed on the terms on which it *had* been.

He travelled for several years. How much his sense of female beauty grew in the congenial climes of Italy and Spain appears in his exquisite picture of the Spanish Mother. There is no trace of Wilkie in that picture; it is like the impassioned effort of some modern Vandyke. What can be more careless, more picturesque, or more *motherly,* than the attitude of the young creature, as she turns to encourage the caresses of her fair-haired boy behind her? Doubtless in all that there was *truth;* the resemblance to that exquisite creature was, surely, perfect; nor will I believe that anything but the heart could ever teach the northern visitant to sunny climes such a lesson on female beauty.

I can fancy all his difficulties as to the portrait of the queen. How those robes and that ermine went against the grain! how conscientiously he dotted down every jewel! how he groaned over the whole picture! and how he commonplaced our queen, and her royal *pendant,* after all! But, it was not his fault. It was like compelling Dryden to become the poet-laureate.

At last we met again; the very night of that day on which Wilkie had been knighted. I had not heard of it; and I greeted him by the old, familiar name. He had grown stout; was well-dressed; looked middle-aged, easy, and had left off his shy "You know." His address was cordial, considering that he had made no effort, that I know of, to see me for some years; but I never shall forget the stare of surprise with which he

received my, certainly very simple, invitation to come down, and visit me in —— for a few days.

"Do you know," said he, — "do you know I have not time to go anywhere; and I am engaged to the Duke of B——, and the Marquis of L——, and, I believe, for nearly six months my list is filled up."

This was in the residence of one of the great. I looked at him, the simple Scotchman, and remembered the days of the Grosvenor Gallery, and the studio, and the venerable mother, and the simple manse, and the blind fiddler, and all around me seemed a dream; and I saw him wearing a white silk waistcoat, and I heard the people calling him "Sir David," and I could hardly imagine that I was waking upon this veritable world, — and I saw him no more!

I heard of his death with a true sorrow. An ornament, such as art requires in this country, had been taken from us, suddenly, awfully; a man calculated to adorn any profession by his integrity and abilities, was lost to us before age had crippled his frame or dimmed his faculties; and, although in the zenith of his fame, Wilkie was not in his perfection as a painter, even when he died. He was a progressive man—never contented with himself, wholly above the littleness of conceit, and worshipping, with the deep enthusiasm of a cold-mannered person, and a cold-mannered people, the great masters of a former day. The new school which he had adopted was, in truth, not well suited to a mind which had more strength than compass; but he would have worked himself into excellence, even in historical

subjects. When I knew him, his very knowledge of history was limited — it had to be read up, I am sure: but ten years had elapsed between our intimacy and the painting of the Columbus, and a man of sound intellect and resolved purpose does much in that time. To *art* in England, considered as a profession, Wilkie was an irreparable loss. He had become, after the death of Lawrence, the representative of that noble and ill-placed profession. He could not, like Lawrence, throw a grace over any pursuit which that fascinating individual might have chosen to take up; but he endowed it with the highest respectability. Never had calumny dared to whisper a syllable that could impair the universal respect which Wilkie inspired. *Taste* and friendship might regret that the latter years of his social life might be said, in some measure, to detract from the sober dignity of his earlier days — that he was the agent rather than the pet of the drawing-rooms of the great, in which his fine and simple nature may have been scared — but I know not. I heard of him (with a sort of sorrow that I shall not attempt to describe,) arranging the *tableaux vivants* at Hatfield, in which the late Lady L—— played Rebecca in Ivanhoe,—and the hand of a great man was thus lent to assist in the diversions of fashion. And yet can it be worse, argue some, than Milton writing a masque to divert the children of nobility? There was a truer nobility in the fireside of the blind poet — a far truer greatness in the studio at Kensington, when the great

master leant his thoughtful face over the easel, and heard the praise that he knew to be indiscriminate, without one flush of pleasure, than any association with rank could bestow.

One word as to art and artists. When the bar, the church, and physic are overstocked, why cannot our aristocracy indulge the talents which exist, more or less concealed ofttimes, in every one, to develop themselves in the field of painting or of sculpture? Why condemn a young man to hard intellectual application, sometimes without the power, and often without the will, when the more fascinating and happier, and compared with the *law*, I should say, the more ennobling and refining career of the fine arts is open to all? The reason is this — and it is a valid one: a man loses his position in society when he becomes an artist, or he has one to gain: the profession does not ensure him rank of itself — such as the calling of a clergyman, the name of a physician, or the fact of having been called to the bar. Why? Because no test of education or of character is required for the artist. Art is left to struggle as it may; painters are not what they were of old, however some bright stars may illumine the darkness of the atmosphere in which art moves. The education of the pencil is all that is required. There are no institutions to improve those adjuncts to art which made Reynolds the refined painter — which raised Shee to the highest position that an artist can hold, and which, in some measure, constituted the superiority of

Wilkie, who, though not a lettered man, had received a solid Scotch education, and might move, and keep his place, in any society.

I sat one day at dinner next to a stout, healthy-looking, middle-aged man, (I was not arrived at that dignity *then,*) and fell into conversation with him. I soon found that I was talking to no ordinary person. But I could not make out his calling, or pursuits in life. I do not know whether any one experiences the same sort of amusement as *I* do, in trying, at a dinner-table, where I happen to be an entire stranger, to unravel the mystery of each man's purpose in life — what he is, and what are his hopes, and fears, and aims. I make manifold guesses — and often they are woeful blunders.

My neighbour conversed in a steady, sensible, unpretending manner, a joke and a pun intervening at times, but seeming out of keeping with the solid character of the punster. His manner was decided, but perfectly inoffensive; he was evidently not of gentle blood — he spoke on no subject connected with art — he could never be suspected, from his conversation, of being literary, but he was evidently endowed with a reputation. He referred once or twice to his own experience, as decisive of certain facts — an indication that a man is well to do in the world. He had the placid air of a prosperous man. He ate carefully, as a man who has a head to preserve, and sufficient in him to make his health of importance. All of a sudden, on some subject connected with blindness being glanced

at, he turned to me a very agreeable pair of deep grey eyes, and said, "Do you know, sir, I was born, it is supposed, blind of one eye; and it was never discovered till I was ten years old?"

Indeed! "It is supposed!"—these impersonal verbs, as the French say, speak some notions of self-consequence. Who supposes it? The world of course—I looked earnestly at the speaker.

"Now can you," he said, turning a somewhat handsome countenance upon me; "tell which of my eyes is blind? Do you guess which it is?"

I looked up into his face. There was an expression of thought and mild good sense in both eyes. They were both clear, and free from any apparent disease or weakness. They were searching, without being staring. I could at first see no difference, but after looking earnestly for some time, I noticed in one a tiny speck, or rather discolourment, on the pupil—so slight, that I do not believe any one could have observed it—"That," I whispered, "is the—the defective eye."

"No, sir; it is not merely defective, it is blind; but I do not let my sitters know it."

"Sitters! a painter, then? Do you find the colours offend you in any way, sir?"

He looked at me by way of answer. A momentary confusion appeared on that contented and honest face.

"I never use colours, sir," he replied in a subdued tone, as much as to say, "Don't you know me? I model in clay." In clay! To be sure; I must have

been made of clay at that moment. I never was so stupid before, nor since. I plunged, as I always do when I feel awkward, into country matters, talked of a long journey by the coach — coaches were the subject then. How I had come up a hundred miles in eleven hours, or some such feat, wonderful then. I was looked on as a sort of hero, I believe, by the company. My neighbour listened dispassionately to me, turned his blind eye (the right) on me, and said,

"You were speaking of Derbyshire, sir; do you happen to know a range of hills they call 'The Shottery Hills,' in that part of the world? I was born there."

Indeed! — remarkable circumstance! — "I was born there!" I suppose everybody was born somewhere; and what right has he "to be born" more than anybody else. This man talks as if he were Bonaparte. I bowed; as if to return thanks for the confidence. The next moment I was disarmed.

"My father," he added calmly, going on eating his dinner as he spoke, "was a small farmer at Shottery. There's a range of hills" (helping himself to salad as he resumed) "that lie almost in a circle. Among those is my native place."

I began to reverence him, to reverence any man who, in a London party, can own that his father "was a small farmer." "This man is a great man, — he has a great mind," thought I. I began my exploring system.

"You were speaking of modelling, sir," said I. "I

came up from Lichfield some little time since. I saw a fine specimen of sculpture there—those two children——"

He interrupted me, "Yes, sir; they look very well where they are placed. I am satisfied that they could not have been better situated."

Lofty man!—he is satisfied! So, he has a right to be "satisfied," as well as to be born. I really was amused. Perhaps he read my thoughts even with his blind eye, for he added a few moments afterwards, as if to prevent mistakes, and consequent awkwardness,

"It is natural for *me* to feel an interest in the situation of that monument, you will allow, sir."

Conviction rushed in upon me at once. How blind I had been! But I was, by this time, no longer the raw boy who had worshipped L. E. L., but the travelled, initiated, cautious man of society. I took up the cue directly. My neighbour, I perceived, had a right to consider that his fame was understood and known. It was Chantrey to whom I had been chattering in such an eclipse of my intellect. I recovered myself, drew up my reins, entered into an easy and protracted conversation with him, and was extremely gratified.

I was prepared to be pleased—for who that ever goes to Lichfield can do otherwise than look with a partial eye towards Chantrey? I had attended the service in Lichfield Cathedral, chiefly to indulge a dreamy fondness I have always had for dwelling on the memory of Miss Seward, or, rather, of her times, of

her associates — especially the ill-fated Major André, the romance of whose early history forms so touching a prelude to the tragedy of his death. I was fond—perhaps from some secret sympathy — of reverting to the days of his correspondence with the Sneyds, especially the loved Honora, cold to poor André, but afterwards smitten by the fascinations of Richard Lovell Edgeworth, whose young wife she, and her sister Elizabeth, successively became. I was always fond of André's letters, when he was in London, plodding in a merchant's counting-house. He caught the military fever which maddened all the young and brave at that time — but he would not have gone to America had Honora returned the deep attachment which he bore her to the last. Her picture was worn round his neck when Washington — remorseless with the worst pretext that ever man invented — upon *principle*, condemned the gallant youth to die as a spy. Poor André! how his story haunts you, as you enter the dim aisles of Lichfield Cathedral!

I had stood there recently, when I met Chantrey. The Holy Communion had been administered there, where the children seemed to sleep, the head of the one pillowed on the shoulder of the other, by the then Dean of Lichfield, the grandfather of those fair and short-lived beings who reposed beneath. A few persons only had remained to receive the Sacrament — I was among the few. The deepest silence reigned, broken only by the hollow voice of Dean Woodhouse, echoing through the angles of the building. My eyes rested

upon the figure of the elder child, the girl, whose finely formed face recalled the hereditary beauty to which she had a claim, her mother and her aunt having been once the belles of their county. Nothing can be more touching than the pensive calmness of that young face, bending above the younger countenance that reposes on her shoulder. The children beneath — the old man standing by them, presented touching mementos of the fleeting and sublunary nature of all around us. The words of the holy office fell with a deeper meaning on the ear — the living lesson was impersonified before us — the young shoot taken — the bud blighted — the old, seared stem left to point the hopes of his fellow mortals still to immortality.

I left the cathedral with a solemn feeling that not even the grandeur of York Minster, devoid as it is, at least to me, of those home associations which we finite beings love, has yet inspired. No — not with its lofty roof, its magnificent chapter house, its grand tombs of the proud and mighty archbishops who lie there in their robes, as if still ruling over the edifice. The monuments of Johnson, of Garrick, seem to belong to man in his social state — nor least, does the tablet inscribed to Saville, the beloved friend of Miss Seward, commemorate the ties which are never more truly and touchingly recalled than in scenes so solemn. Many have attached to *that* tie, scandal — I do not. To an enthusiast there are many affections besides that into which the vulgar resolve all. I thought of the day of mourning, the anniversary which Miss Seward set

apart for Saville — I read the justly censured epitaph which she penned — but I returned to gaze once more upon those sculptured children, as on holy things. The face of the girl is present to me now — beautiful, gentle, ill-starred being — drowned, if I remember rightly.

"Elle étoit de ce monde, où les plus belles choses
Ont le pire destin:
Et Rose, elle a vêçu ce que vivent les roses —
L'espace d'un matin."

Full of these ideas, I viewed Chantrey with an interest which neither his manner nor his conversation would, perhaps, have inspired. I never should have guessed him to be a man of genius: it is now the fashion to say that he was *not* a man of genius. Strong sense, a kind heart, an excellent judgment, with a dash of that determined good opinion of oneself which naturally follows success in minds not highly educated, marked his deportment then. In after life, Chantrey became loquacious, and a teller of good stories, and I think he lost his position. A truly great man (or a man reputed great, for if we come to analyse the claims to that word, discussion would be endless) can hardly do too little in general society. The only thing he has to do is to hide weaknesses, — he need not discover strength, — the world does that for him. He should never go beyond his depth; he should only not disappoint. These are the arts to preserve the fame of a genius, if it can be preserved. Of that I am doubtful.

I told Chantrey under what aspects I had seen his monument of the children. He listened attentively, and again remarked that "it was well placed." I remember being very much struck with the circumstance that, after visiting Lichfield Cathedral, he had left it without seeing, or trying to see, the monuments of Johnson, or of Garrick, or of Miss Seward, or of any one. He lived, evidently, in the generation around him. The great men of the day were his great men; his sitters were his world, and no contemptible world either. The great secret of his excellence in busts was his shrewd, careful looking into character, and his rarely attempting a *beau idéal* of anything or person. When he did so, he failed. He could not put a robe upon any one gracefully, but he gave an air of resemblance to every button of a coat. His failures, in great attempts, are numerous. Witness his statue of Lord Melville in the Parliament House at Edinburgh,—a clumsy, overpowering, lifeless mass, mournfully contrasted with the speaking, breathing, almost moving figure of Duncan Forbes, by Roubiliac, to which you turn as from the dead, in Lord Melville, to the living. You gaze on the Lord President Forbes, half fancying that he is really addressing you, and that you must listen; you can fancy the echoes of his voice beneath that antique roof,—but Melville is merely the Melville of the sculptor. Finely contrasted with these two,—with the massive inanity of Chantrey's figure of Melville, and the impassioned attitude of Duncan Forbes,—is the calm beauty of the statue of Dundas. There

is no want of life in that noble and reflective countenance, resembling, it is said, a present Lord of Session, —one as much enshrined in the hearts of his fellow-townsmen and friends as ever man was: dignified, but not heavy, is the figure.

But Chantrey's failures were not his own fault. They were the fault of that fashionable and ill-judging public who insisted on having from him what he could not give; who should have gone for imagination and creative force to Westmacott and to Baillie, but who chose that Chantrey should, like a country actor, play all parts; that he should be the "only man," as the authoress of "The Old Men's Tales," in her exquisitely-ended story of the Country Vicarage, expresses it. I have no doubt but that Chantrey felt his own deficiencies; indeed, he proved it by applying to Stothard for the exquisite design of the two children. Is it not Isaac Walton who writes of Dr. Donne—"Nothing in his life became him like the leaving of it?" I am inclined to observe, no act of Chantrey's was more becoming than his last will and testament; nothing finer than the encouragement he left to art; nothing more touching than the sum bequeathed to one to whom he owed much of his fame, his peace of mind, his immortality as a sculptor—Allan Cunningham.

CHAP. VIII.

HATTON RECTORY.

Some years after this evening's ruminations, I happened to be travelling in a post-chaise from Birmingham to Warwick, when the sound of village bells, and the sight of something very like the mast of a ship — "some tall admiral" — recalled to my bewildered remembrance that it must be May-day. May-day? — the first of May? — no! — that is over; — 'tis the twelfth of the month, Anno Domini . . . . "Yet, surely," I said to myself, as there seemed, on driving into the village whence issued the peal of bells, some festivity going on. — "Hallo, boy!" addressing a veteran of fifty — "postboy, draw up; — what are all these country lads and lasses trudging along the road for? — what's the occasion?"

"Occasion, sir?" answered the postboy, checking his hacks, — "occasion? why — " he took some time to expound the word in his stupid Warwickshire head — "why, this 'ere 's May-day, sir."

"May-day? — by the way, so it is! — old May-day — 'the tears of old May-day' — yes, you say right. And pray, postboy, what may be the name of this village, where they keep old May-day instead of new

May-day? Why, we can't be very far from Warwick?"

"Three mile, sir," answered my veteran, laying his whip over the right shoulder of one of his nags, who had some remains of blood in him, and wanted to get on to the Black Swan at Warwick. "This is Atton, sir."

"Atton—oh, Hatton!—Yes,—very true, very good. Drive on slowly, and let us see what these good people are about."

A most cheerful and singular scene now presented itself. To the right stood a grave, red-brick, substantial house, devoid of those picturesque gables, that ivied porch, and mossy, dilapidated, Queen-Anne's-bounty-wanting tenements, usually called parsonages in this remarkably liberal, devout country;—wanting, too, the healthy, proximate churchyard, kindly meant to chasten the curate, or vicar, by giving him and his seven children a taste of typhus fever;—devoid, too, as I looked up at the windows, of any signs of those same dozens of children decreed occasionally to lean curates, but seldom granted to fat rectors;—devoid of the bars to nursery windows:—a quiet, orderly, prosperous, weather-proof abode. "Lucky man this! And this is," I muttered to myself, "positively the residence of Doctor Parr—Samuel Parr! It,"—I musingly exclaimed, "has received Sheridan beneath its roof—nurtured, too, his son! It has been the resort of the learned, of the political, of the great and fashionable—the home of Samuel Parr!" "Drive on, postboy," I added, after a few moments' reflection,

half debating with myself whether I should not step out and leave a card for Dr. Parr; the blinds are down —all is as still as a dungeon. "The Doctor, I suppose," (such were my reflections,) "is from home: gone, perhaps, on some grave mission, perhaps to Holkham, to meet some political friends, full of that impossible chimera, Reform in Parliament—perhaps to some visitation,—or, perhaps, to one of the Universities; or, at all events, probably engaged on some important business."

We drove through the village of Hatton. To say that it is, for Warwickshire, an ugly village, is not to abuse it; for of all the counties in England, I defy any one of them to match Warwickshire in villages. These have the knack, somehow, of always planting themselves down in pretty spots, beneath umbrageous trees; or just on the brow of those few gentle acclivities which afford a prospect of sweet meadows, skirted with hawthorn hedges, then one mass of fragrant snow. And these same hedges are sure, in Warwickshire, to be carpeted by such tufts of primroses, such beds of hyacinths—and the fields which they surround are so rich, so green—that one wonders not at the stupendous arms of those oak-trees which stretch here and there, beneath which those children are playing. But to return to Hatton. It lies on either side of the main road from Birmingham, and is homely, but not unpleasing in its aspect; for the cottages were neat, and there was an air of prosperity throughout the humble scene: and you were sure, if a door chanced to be half open, to

catch a glimpse of a well-whitewashed little room, with a blazing fire, (coals are cheap there — everything was cheap,) some gaudy pictures over the high chimney-piece, in little black frames, — firetongs and pokers as bright as any nobleman's plate, a reddened floor, a well-conditioned clock. Such little property as pictures, cloths, chests of drawers, and other household matters, characterise the homes of the rural poor where they *pledge* not — where they know but the name of the pawnbroker, save as the synonyme with ruin.

The village was of some length: about two hundred yards from the main road rose the church, surmounted with a neat tower, to which the common approach led through a corn-field, which seemed, at that little distance, almost to surround the holy edifice; and along the walk, which leads straight through this same corn-field, such a group was now parading; — but stay, I must portray my own situation at this critical moment.

I *was* a good-looking young man — yes, undoubtedly; and as I look in this pocket-mirror (kept merely for the convenience of my friends), methinks, among other retrospects, I will take a retrospect of myself. There were none of these lines on my forehead then; my grey eyes were blue — they have faded, like the rest of me. Heavens! what trouble I had then to brush my locks into any order; now, the only difficulty is not to brush them off. I had a passable figure — a regimental cut; I bore a good name — that, thank Heaven! is unaltered: so, now let us proceed to Dr. Parr.

I held my hand before my eyes to shade the sun off. Who can that be? I saw a group advancing, in a sort of array. First, in gown and bands, issuing from the church-door, stalked a portly gentleman, firm in gait as if he had been in the full vigour of his youth, yet looking advanced in life. He was talking very fast, and very emphatically, to another person on his right hand, who listened to him with the deepest reverence. Shall I describe him? Yes! Dear Jack! — No; — thou art worthy of a chapter to thyself.

As these two notable individuals advanced towards me, the merry peals of the bells again broke forth, and were challenged, as if in musical combat, by the fainter sounds of a village band, stationed not far off, on the Green, to which the Doctor was hastening. All around denoted a jubilee. A flag graced the summit of the church: the lanes about were full of country people; some walking, some in carts, some in double-horse fashion — all in gala suits; the younger tribe decked with flaring ribbons; while the matrons wore the picturesque old red cloaks and black bonnets, then not fallen into disuse, and constituting the last remains of a national costume. But the notion of a high festivity taking place of the monotony of village life, might still more be deduced from the appearance of the Doctor himself. He had his prime silk cassock on that day, his most flowing silk gown — his best of shovel hats; but *the* feature of his equipment was his wig. We talk of the language of flowers, but those who knew this great scholar, comprehended, too, the language of wigs.

They knew the temper of the day by those silent advertisements; they knew the company that was expected; they could almost have sworn that the day would turn out well or ill, pleasant or gloomy, by the face of the wig that took its turn among a large family of curly brothers. If the Doctor expected a bishop, he had an extra breadth of frizzle behind; if only a learned book-worm, there was a sort of undress concern, sad-looking, and half powdered, to correspond with the general undress of the reception; and so on through every variety of wig. For his particular set of humble friends, whom he treated as he pleased, the Doctor had a very worn-out, unbecoming article, together with which he generally put on his worst manners, and worst temper. In this I never saw him.

As he walked rapidly, though in a measured pace, towards me, that remarkable deep grey eye of his, long, reflective, searching, met mine. I took off my hat — I protest I trembled; but then to the rear, was a procession of young ladies, who had followed the Doctor out of church, where he had opened the proceedings of the day by prayer, and an elaborate sermon for the occasion by a learned clergyman. The Doctor stared me in the face; some dozens of fine eyes stared too: I moved on one side to let them all pass; but the procession stood still. What a moment, when, in the centre of a growing corn-field, with a great flag attracting one's bewildered gaze, the hum of the village in one's ears, I first heard *that* voice, that peculiar voice, which none but one — one man among the many who have tried

the thing, could ever, in any degree, imitate, or even recall!

"Thir," exclaimed that voice, in one of its softest variety of tones, "you theem to us a stranger. We take the stranger in — that is, if he be willing to be taken it — worthy to be taken in — to our pathtime. This is May-day, thir — old May-day — proper May-day. • You may, if a thscolar," he added, casting another searching glance, (I felt my knees shake, — and then that battalion behind him!) — "that is, an English thscolar, know that beautiful poem, the 'Tears of old May-day.' We honour these tears, thir, and we challenge you to do so too."

I bowed; looked down at my hat, back at my post-chaise; was obliged — overpowered — honoured: the end of it was, I turned back towards the village with the Doctor.

Before we had reached a wicket, which opened into the main road, I was at my ease with him. For Dr. Parr had within him the elements of good-breeding in its highest form: he could assume the loftiest and the most fascinating condescension — he could be the coarsest of men. It depended a good deal upon his wigs; they magnetised him. On that day, dear to me as the first on which I had the happiness of becoming acquainted with one for whom, with his imputed foibles, every being who knew him felt far more affection than any other sentiment — on that May-day, the formidable scholiast was in his happiest mood. Gracious, almost paternal, in his manners to the young; to the old, forbearing, and in some instances courteous. He rarely

liked the old — especially old ladies; but he had his days of endurance, and this was one — his days when, like the lion, he would only growl, not roar.

We walked towards the green. Dr. Parr had that faculty so perceptible in those whose minds have never slumbered — the quickest possible comprehension of the why and the wherefore, and a shrewd ready conception of who and what you are, an almost intuitive knowledge of where you come from, and a provoking penetration into what you are going to do. It happened that my great uncle had been a bishop; our names were similar. That was enough for the Doctor; and by the time that we reached the green, he had exhausted every epithet of encomium on the memory of one whom I — but I was a mere creature in petticoats at the time — used to think a very crusty old curmudgeon. I never shall forget the parade of encomiums, — "that most learned, most excellent, pious divine," — I bowed, and drew in my breath, — "that model of courtesy, and type of benevolence and humanity." I bowed again, and tried to believe that I have been mistaken, and that the dogmatical, pugnacious, awful right reverend of my childish days had turned his dark side on me alone. But that wholesale regard, that over-weight veneration, were characteristics of Dr. Parr. He was a tolerably good hater; but a capital hand as an encomiast, whether the praise related to a round of beef, or to a friendly and learned divine. His eulogiums during the latter part of his life somewhat lost their reputation, from the lavish manner in which they were dispensed. There was a free circula-

tion of coin; but it was a coin somewhat debased by its appropriation.

I wish I could remember all that he said as we were walking along; but I was young, and egotistical, and my own desire to shine stood greatly in the way of a clear recollection of the remarks of others. I remember my own speeches well enough, for I ran a rapid review over them when we separated that evening. One thing struck me, the reverential affection with which Dr. Parr was greeted by the inhabitants of his parish as we met them on our way to the green. It was not merely the courtesies of a dozen of little boys and girls, but the whispered blessings of the old; the half-respectful, half-cheerful greetings of the young; the hearty good will and gratitude that beamed in many eyes, as the young farmers and the vassal cow-boys doffed their hats, and the village damsels dropped low curtsies to the Doctor. The poor feared him not. Such awe as he is said to have inspired never troubled *their* hearts. They found him ever the same; the tender friend in all their troubles; the old-fashioned, pastoral adviser in all their difficulties; the parish priest, without one atom of the scholar's pride, to *them*. And I have heard these simple folk were proud of their pastor's learning, although they knew not wherein it consisted. They felt that it raised him far above the level of other men, and they gloried in his glory. This very festival was an effort, but little appreciated by the neighbouring landholders, to restore to the poor some of their ancient enjoyments. It was not — to their shame be it said —

even encouraged by the county gentlemen of Warwickshire, — nay, it was even ridiculed by some, condemned by others. But the benevolent heart which attempted the revival of one of the beautiful customs of old England (adapted to her variable climate, and according with the indications of nature,) is accepted *there*, where the emotions of that heart, which has been long since silenced in the grave, are sublimated into heavenly attributes.

The May-pole was an emblem of the Doctor's pleasant power over his fair parishioners, and his female friends in general. It was decked with garlands of ribbons, curiously wrought by young fingers, with some degree of skill, and even of costliness. It was also garnished with those gorgeous ornaments of field and dell which no hands can imitate. And now another trait of Dr. Parr's character might be observed. The company assembled on the Green was what the young exclusives of Holborn would say, speaking of St. Giles's, "extremely mixed." The Doctor's parishioners were there, down to a cow-boy. The very Queen of the May herself was a laughing, rosy, black-eyed farmer's daughter, the aristocratic belle of Hatton, and was affianced to a beau in fustian and long knee-ties — a young grazier, with a very calf-like expression of countenance, who stood uncomfortably kicking his legs against each other as the ceremonial of the day proceeded.

Now, no one valued the rights of rank more than the

Doctor himself. A Whig in principle, he was an aristocrat at heart. I don't like him the worse for it; "'tis human nature," as one of Captain Marryat's characters observes; and I should like to know who does not find the seed developed, more or less, of that weakness in his own heart. Besides, Dr. Parr had that deep-seated veneration for English antiquity, old names, old associations, which has since become so prevalent in society. Lord John Manners would have adored him, in his reverence for peers: and a still holier bond of union would have been their common desire for the restoration of national holidays. In hearing the aspirations of Young England, I sink back in my easy chair, think where I have heard sentiments somewhat resembling those breathed in terms never to be forgotten, and dream that I am again at Hatton.

With all his worship of aristocracy, and marking, as he generally did, the distinction between the gentle and the simple very closely, it was the Doctor's fancy to do away with all such definitions, for the occasion. And in this he has been followed by the revivals of the present day. The May Queen was led, blushing and bouncing to the dance, by a young nobleman, a scion of a ducal house. The grazier walked away, very much after the fashion of a bullock going to be killed, as he seemed to grapple in the dance with a young lady of the county. A sprinkling of neighbouring curates, and various officers from Coventry, were mated with the village school-mistress, the seamstress, and the daughter of the owner of a large public-house:

such was the general arrangement. Away they went — down the middle and up again — hands four round, and back again — allemande, and, — but I forget; even my nieces won't know what I mean by all this: different days have come over us. Boulanger! Adieu, college hornpipe! let me sigh when I retrace thee in my own mind, adieu! money musk, talk of its being fatiguing, what can match the fatigue of the polka? what can exceed the dishevelment of ringlets, the destruction of complexion, the demolition of all womanly grace, or manly respect, in that low, vulgar, debasing, ungraceful dance? My peasants of Hatton would not have endured it. My grazier would have expired, rather than have taken such a liberty with his lofty partner, as is taken hourly by the unknown with the unknown. No! pattern as he was of the true chivalric yeoman, he never touched her hand without a bow — poussetted, holding her arms out as if he were going to spit and roast her; and looked at her with his stupid Warwickshire stare, whether he moved to the right, or to the left, to the north or the south.

The good old Doctor made quite a business of the day's entertainment. "Jack," he cried, addressing a clergyman who stood merely near him, "this is good, Jack — very good. Go, my friend, to the rectory," he whispered, "and ask what time dinner will be served." I took the hint, and looked around for my post-chaise. The Doctor laid his soft, fat hand upon my arm. He was proud of his hand, which "showed *blood*," as he always said; and, indeed, for a man of a

thick, coarse description of person, it was a fine, even a delicate hand. Well, the hand which had flogged at Harrow (and even at Hatton, one young nobleman in particular, when a man six feet high)—the hand which had scribbled sufficient electioneering squibs at the last Warwick election, to fill a small room—the hand which composed the Spitalfields Sermons, and collected the characters of Charles James Fox—the hand that penned the Address, under some awful long name, to the Birmingham dissenters, when they were kind enough to think of celebrating the anniversary of the French revolution—the best production, and certainly the most useful and effectual that ever issued from the library at Hatton—the hand that wrote these, and, more, that penned innumerable unreadable letters, full of eloquence, but couched in hieroglyphics—was laid upon my arm. Never did any fair lady's touch bring a brighter glow upon my cheek, or cause a greater acceleration of my pulse. At the same moment those dark-grey eyes, full of fire, but of fire beneath smoke, fringed and softened by those dark eye-lashes, were turned on me; they were full of meaning, searching, as if he wished to probe my inmost heart, when in solemn accents he began (I held my breath the while): "There is round of boiled beef, cold, with pickles at the rectory; would you renounce these, and hope to be forgiven?"

"My dear sir!" I had tact enough only to smile (the Doctor expected too much reverence, and did not

like the familiarity of a loud laugh, even when he had provoked it), "you do me too much honour."

"No sir! The nephew of my learned, and reverend, and *revered* friend," returned the Doctor, emphatically, "cannot be too much honoured in Hatton. And now, sir, how do you like our village gambols? What think you of our May-pole?"

The grazier had by this time grown quite merry, happy, and familiar; and was poussetting at a violent rate with the squire's daughter, who endeavoured, fearing the rector's displeasure, if she showed any airs, to keep her partner to the touch of a finger. But no; he was in love with himself; his proficiency in the Scotch steps, learned, I presume, in the Town Hall at Warwick, had quite exhilarated him; he forgot he was not dancing with Betsy, the farmer's daughter, or with Miss Sally, at the Grange; heated, and retreating, the county belle had just changed sides and back again for the last time, when the Doctor drew my attention to the May-pole.

"It was historical," he informed me. And surely such a trophy to Flora never was upraised before. Hoops of ribbons dangled at either extremity of its two vast arms; a vast top-knot of bows and artificial flowers stuck on the top; down the stem were twined fading garlands of the white hawthorn and laburnum, the periwinkle and the blue-bell. But the peculiarity was this: each garland was framed by one or other of the Doctor's friends and parishioners. And they all seemed to me, from the dear old boaster's description,

to have genealogies as long as the May-pole. One was by Lady This--of a parentage descending from the first red-haired Saxon that had his mile of land in Britain. Another was by Miss —— of Red Hill, near Alcester—a beautiful descendant of the Romans.

"Of the Romans?" quoth I.

"Yes, sir. The Roman road to Camden, in Gloucestershire, is near Red Hill. The women there, sir, from the veriest jade" (a favourite expression of the Doctor's, and no offence) "that holds a milk-pail, to the family of my honoured and excellent friend Mr. ——, hath the Roman features—the beauty, too, of the Roman, with the delicacy of complexion proper to our country. Mark," he added, in his solemn tone, and placing his finger on his broad and flexible nose; "I do not say that the intellect of the Roman has descended in due proportion. No, sir, Will Shakspeare hath exhausted all mother-wit in the county. We are a people of num-skulls, sir."

I ventured meekly to dissent—tried my young hand at a compliment; but was silenced with a "Pooh, pooh!" or rather a surly "Pish!"

I retreated into my shell as fast as possible. Strange was the influence which this powerful man almost instantly acquired over every human being with whom he came in contact. In his intercourse with society, it was not so much that he was a tyrant, as that he found ready-made slaves, eager to worship him. I have seen the daughter of a duke light his pipe, at his command; and beheld the proudest officers under

her Majesty's command, quail under the dread of his satire: for, when that issued forth, it was no delicate, playful flame, like a spirit-fed lamp, such as modern sarcasm may light up, though always with some degree of risk at a dinner-table; it was a volume of red-hot lava, from a bellowing crater, scorching, overwhelming, devastating as it went. It could be aroused on the slightest occasion, and, in an unlooked-for moment; though, generally, the man gave out his tokens of a coming irruption like the volcano: — growlings and grumblings were heard; then, a drear stillness and sullenness denoted that the moral powers were treasured up to break out with the greater force. Then came the burst of passion, shall we call it? Yes, of passion; for benevolent, good, pious temper never formed an item of his code of duty. It was not, indeed, in those days, much regarded in education; and men — and learned men in particular — assigned to themselves the privilege of the wolf in the fable, who took the head of the stream, and left the meek lamb to dip into the turbid waters at the bottom. Learned men, even great bores and pedagogues, are now very humane sort of creatures; they do not betray any very inordinate contempt for their fellow men; they submit to listen; they think that women have a right to reflect, and to be listened to. If they are dull, they are, at any rate, inoffensive. It seems that your political economists of the utilitarian school have taken their place, more or less, in society. They always eat enormously — a privilege of

learning in former days. They despise all knowledge but their own. They have a sovereign contempt for all women except their own peculiar disciples and adorers; they generally marry stupid, do ish, second-rate, housekeeping, and housekeeper-looking wives. In short, they have all the dulness of the former class of learned men without that elegance of mind which redeemed the scholars of the last century from being thoroughly disgusting.

I was enchained by Dr. Parr the very first moment that I saw him. And why? "What's Hecuba to me, or I to Hecuba?" What had I to do with him, or he with me? That is little to the purpose; I was his slave at once. He was not a tall man, yet there was a sort of majesty in his deportment, that made one feel short in his company. He was, at that time, not a rich man; his star was not in the ascendant; his learning had been rewarded by very scanty preferment; his party was most unfashionable. There was no state in the plain rectory-house; no magnificence to enslave the opinions of the vulgar; he was living, one may almost say, in obscurity, compared with the widely-spreading fame of his acquirements. Remarkably self-willed by nature, I laid aside every inclination in his presence, just for the sake of making his wishes mine. Everybody did the same; but then, —but then, let me explain it.

Those who set out in life, resolved to have their own way, must be fools if they do not obtain it. A powerful determination put well into practice, used daily,

like fire-irons, and never allowed to rust, as the housemaids say, does much. Dr. Parr knew no relentings; he never said, "Will it be agreeable to you to do this?" No: "You will do me the honour, sir, to walk in. We command you." As for his especial friends and corps of auxiliaries, *they* flew at a moment at his "Jack," or his "Will." Nay more, pretty, blushing, high-born ladies, to whom I would have scarcely dared to whisper a compliment, responded to his "jade," or "hussy," or "wench," with few exceptions, as humbly as if they were infinitely honoured, as readily as if addressed in euphonistic phrase by Lord Petersham, then the beau of beaus—the king of hearts—the elegant precursor of the (now) fading perfections of Count D'Orsay.

One digression more—and then, on to Dr. Parr's round of boiled beef. There *was* one individual who resisted, in the most gentle, and winning, and effectual way, the Doctor's encroachments on the rights of society. I remember her well—oh! how well! She was a "single woman of a certain age." (Who has not read that charming, beautiful story, so called, of the late Mrs. Sullivan's, and sighed to think that the delicate and gifted spirit of which it was the creation, had gone hence?) "A single woman of a certain age,"—that is, then, about thirty—for the world has grown younger even since my young days. Ladies of thirty are girls now — then they wore caps, looked prim, and had long sleeves to their gowns.

The lady who fought with her own delicate weapons

of finely polished steel, against Dr. Parr, was a fair, slight, drooping creature, so *internally* polite, if one may so speak, that she could not be otherwise than courteous to a street-sweeper. And, indeed, hers was the benevolence that springs from a guileless, chastened character. She had known better days—that is to say, *richer* days. She was not prosperous; she was not in want. Indeed, the superiority of her intellect, her exemplary life, her beauty—for she was still surpassingly lovely,—had obtained for her an influence unacknowledged, but felt, throughout a limited society, to which the Doctor was rather an interloper than a frequenter,—a cataract falling from on high into a smooth plain.

Well, he loved this gentle creature, to his credit,—I will not use the word, *liked;* it was love—affection rather; the very best sort of affection that could be felt—an affection, I will *not* venture to say, pure as the object that inspired it. Now for its manifestations. They consisted of singling her out for his coarse jests; for the degrading office of lighting his pipe; for the butt, to amuse, for *his* pleasure, and at *her* expense, the company, be they who they may. This happened once—never again, and why?

She was ordered to "Come hither, wench; light my pipe:—nay, first clean it out with thy taper-finger." How well I recollect it,—on a hot summer's day, after a three-o'clock dinner, the party chosen by himself, the sun flaring in upon the silent, awe-struck circle! Con-

versation took its departure when the great man appeared.

"Come hussy; Dr. Parr commands thee."

Then spoke that meek, subdued being, whose silver tones still sound in my ear. They, too, are silenced now in death.

"No, Doctor, I do not choose."

The company, especially the gentleman of the house, a *remarkably* subservient friend, stared aghast. The Doctor fixed upon her those deep-meaning eyes; his brows were lowered over them; even the air seemed darkened; a storm was coming—Vesuvius was growling. "Gentle soul," thought I, "now for some of the Doctor's choice appellatives." This was when I knew him better.

"Choose! but I command!"

"You have no right to command: we are free here," answered, as if she had been addressing a sister angel, that soft voice. "I, for one, shall not obey."

"Then, depart!" returned the Doctor, his face suddenly diffusing all over a deep brick-dust red, and waving his hand to the door.

"I shall not stir. You have no right to tell me to depart," replied the same mild tones.

A deep silence followed. It was broken by a noise much resembling the whizzing of soda-water ere it finally escapes from the bottle—the Doctor's laugh. It became long and loud. The company had finally joined; and a smile played on the fine face of her who had resolution to resist the domestic despot.

"Thou art a wench——" he began.

He was interrupted.—"No, Doctor; I decline those appellations. You have no right to apply them."

"Why, then," he cried, "you are my enemy!"

"Unless," she responded softly, but with dignity, "you give me better reason to consider you my friend."

The colloquy ceased. The single lady was frowned at, pulled, pinched, whispered to, for fear that things should go too far. It was agreed, when she left the room, that it would be more prudent not to invite her to meet Dr. Parr. They parted, indeed, without shaking hands; and if the lady had been bowed out of a great man's drawing-room, as a great man is said to have bowed out a lady not a quarter of a century ago, she could not have been more pitied. From that time she went by the name of Dr. Parr's "Enemy;" he, indeed, gave it her himself. But never was there a party among her friends, at which he was the attraction, but he ordered that his "enemy" should be invited to meet him. No more names, no more lighting of his pipe; but a profound, partial, courtly respect marked his manner to his "enemy." I remember when she was ill, how regularly his black spencer, over his cassock and coat, his shovel hat, and family-party wig, not lavishly decked in powder, his old black horse, might be seen at her door;—how he brought out of his capacious pocket, one day, a *morceau* of Oxford brawn (poison to the sick-room), and waited meekly till the cloth had been returned (he was keen in matters of

property);—how sometimes he left a pigeon or two, all mangled and feathery, emerging from that same pocket, or a partridge;—and how long and earnestly he kept the old housekeeper at his horse's head, asking her solemn questions about the invalid, with a true expression of unfeigned feeling; for he had the tenderness of a woman's heart, when anything went wrong. He could not bear to see his friends suffer; and his selfishness dispersed like vapour when real sorrow came among the little community whom he loved.

I have wandered sadly from my subject-matter. Where was I? At the Maypole,—revolving in my mind what had become of my post-chaise. "It is in my farm-yard," quoth the Doctor, answering an inquiring look; "and your steeds are lodged in my stable. You shtay dinner?" (I can give no notion of his lisp, it is indescribable.) I particularly wished to have gone into Warwick by daylight, but as to saying so, it was out of the question. I was magnetised. I bowed,—wondered where my carpet-bag was, and followed the Doctor, who now headed a procession of ladies, towards the rectory.

But first, as full-fledged, in his gown and scarf, and tucking under his arm the rosy hand of the May Queen, he turned from the Green, he stopped short before a company of village musicians—amateurs in smock-frocks, and scarlet continuations, with huge shoe-ties, and a true Warwickshire stupidity of look—the church choir—the butcher's son, who played the bassoon—the baker, who scratched on the violin—and a third,

the man of the shop, that shop being a museum of utilities, from raisins up to spelling-books, who worked away at the double bass viol. A reserve of flageolets and Pandean pipes had been called in for the day; and all these, taking off their hats, greeted the Doctor with their best bow and the customary kick behind of the leg — a remnant of the old school — a make-believe of falling down before the great man.

The Doctor looked round: "Gentlemen," he said aloud, "who are bachelors, pay for the music — a shilling each. You, sir," he added, addressing me, "are a bachelor, I presume?"

I bowed — blushed — and muttered something about being Cœlebs but *not* in search of a wife.

If there was a woman in existence whom he hated, *par excellence*, it was Hannah More. Her very virtues were wormwood to Dr. Parr; they were not of *his* sort. I heard a torrent of invectives, and began to think I was "seeing him" to great advantage; just as one talks of a very destructive conflagration being "a very good fire."

"But where," I said, after walking some steps, during which the words — "unfathomable nonsense! unbounded presumption! arrogant pretensions!" all met my ear, — "where are the gentlemen hurrying away to, Doctor? You surely do not mean to allow the ladies to be left alone?"

"No, thir, I am with them; and Jack, and Bob, and we take you in, thir, as a shtranger, and defenceless among shtrangers, — and, therefore, most like a woman."

I was only too happy — but cast a lingering look behind at a battalion of dejected tail coats, — black,

blue, and green, — who were hastening to an ordinary at the village public-house, over which hung a sign (I forget what), on which were inscribed the words: — "Good entertainment for man and beast." It was a fancy of the Doctor's to send all the gentlemen to dine at one place, to keep the ladies to himself. I don't know exactly why. It might be, that, a widower and a clergyman, and his company being a *little* mixed (my friend the grazier not even excepted), he consulted the proprieties, as he did at a ball given some years before, when the ladies all supped in one room, the gentlemen in another. Was the arrangement a consequence of the recollection of old manners, when, before the women were educated, and men refined, it was not so perfectly safe in point of decorum, as it now is, to permit the sexes to mingle freely? There is a greater latitude *now*, because there is more real propriety in the women, more principle in the gentlemen of the present generation. Or was it, as many said, to encourage and enrich the village innkeeper, a thrifty, respectable man, that the male part of the company were banished, under sentence of drinking his bad wine, and eating his coarse Warwickshire mutton (the only coarse thing in Warwickshire): or was it to save the thirty ladies harboured in the rectory, from being crowded? On the whole, I think it was well done; although the malcontents were many among the retreating gentlemen. None liked *to say* much about the matter, lest it should be thought to proceed from a repugnance to pay for their dinner; but a general consternation reigned. Young

curates (the very name of a curate, as Sydney Smith says, inspires compassion — it seems just fitted in to the word *poor*,) felt in their pockets for their silver. The grazier thought, indeed, loudly of the virtue of giving old Smith, or Jones, or whatever the man's name was, "a benefit;" but his face grew red as he talked of his lost partner. Four or five boyish young men, the victims of a system of private tutorage, called out loudly on the cruelty of being just allowed to look at their partners, and then driven from them. "As if we were a herd going to Smithfield," said one young fellow, a remarkable adept at driving a stage-coach, looking at the grazier. They turned into the inn, however, and crowded into the little dining-room, with its sanded floor. The Doctor's head man of domestic convenience, a clergyman, I grieve to say, who was servant to the Doctor's intellect, took the head of the table; the grazier was, by unanimous consent, placed at the bottom, where he drank healths, gave toasts, and made a speech!

We, meantime, paraded the village to the rectory. 'Tis a grand house now. I have not seen it of late. I could not endure to see it. Could not the desecrating hand of those who have enlarged the former house of Dr. Parr, have left it alone? A good house can be raised in a day; but who can rebuild a house in which a great man lived? The house, grant it, was ignoble, — perhaps uncomfortable, unpicturesque, — but it was *his!* His was the narrow entrance, — I see it now, — into which he hurried, what time two learned dignita-

ries, bishops, arrived on a prefixed visit, to receive these awful guests. Tom Sheridan — brilliant, erratic — the very last person to have been placed under such hands, was then living at Hatton, and a most undutiful pupil he was. No end of the anecdotes told of his pranks played upon that combination of simplicity and pomposity which the great scholar occasionally displayed. On this occasion, the best wig was called into its occupation from a room in which, on a kind of dumb waiter with arms, it hung in company with but one superior, — that worn at Oxford, — and surrounded with innumerable inferiors for more frequent use. The Doctor hurried down as the Mitred coach drove up to the door, which opened, if I remember aright, direct upon the road. But the evil spirit was behind him; into the wig went one turkey-cock's feather — two — three — then the wild sprite darted off, cleared the poultry-yard, and found his way into the village, to mingle with the group of admiring boys and girls, to observe the great event of the day.

The other wigs descended stately and expectant from their coach. When they beheld the Doctor — shall I relate it? or will it be construed into disrespect of these learned and estimable men? They were flesh and blood. When they saw him to whom they had made this pilgrimage, thus bedecked, one, it is said, burst into fits of laughter, which overpowered the Latin quotation with which they were received. The other, more wily, bowed low, — very low, to conceal the smile which played upon his episcopal coun-

tenance. But the first was fairly overpowered; and his brother bishop was led by the anxious Doctor gravely and hastily into the parlour, the door mysteriously closed, and a solemn and earnest question put, whether certain distressing reports which had lately gone abroad of Dr. ——'s sanity had—and the deep grey eye was almost suffused as the query was whispered—"any foundation in truth?" How the matter ended, I know not; but feel no doubt but that they all three recovered themselves, after the second bottle of port after dinner. And this was the very passage—these are the very steps; the passage is a hall now;—the very steps on which those square toes that stood transfixed to the spot to receive the bishops are taken away! Taste! thou hast thy crimes, as well as ignorance!

We passed into the house, and were seated, as soon as the ladies had taken off their bonnets, at the dinner-tables. These were spread in a large, square room, which, to the best of my remembrance, the Doctor had added to the rectory, and which the collections of years, and the presents of all the lettered men of his own time, had lined with substantial books. The Doctor's picture,—was it by Romney, or Opie?—I am sure I forget,—hung over the mantel-piece. This was a softened, subdued, nothing-worth likeness; the fire was smothered in those speaking eyes. It was what one calls a flattering likeness; but it flattered the form, and insulted the intellect. The best likeness ever taken of Dr. Parr was one by Dawe, a cabinet

picture, an inimitable portrait, and as near to the singular original as canvas can be to life.

The Doctor's library was, I hear, much overrated during his life, and certainly contained, according to the catalogue, many things which learned men would usually throw away. But much was expected from the notes which it was his practice to write on the margins of his own books, illustrative of his opinions, and testifying to his enmities and friendships, critical, biographical, and etymological. His chief power consisted in the forcible delineation of character. He was eminently dramatic. No man could lay a man's merits more conspicuously and ably before you than he could; no one could master a villain — in words, I mean, — more completely. One never forgot his pictures. They were oftentimes, indeed generally, drawn in colours far too strong; but, though their fidelity might be questioned, the vigour of his pencil was felt by every one who knew its touches.

In this room he seldom wrote; and, until his last illness, sat but little. Then, I rather think, when laid up with some complaint in his leg, the Doctor made this his reception-room, and kept his friends writing for him, like secretaries. When in health, Dr. Parr's place of study, and of smoke, was a summer-house at the end of his useful, tasteless garden; where, in summer time, he was to be seen at five or six o'clock, writing as if for his bread, and smoking as if for a wager. He took but little breakfast—a cup of coffee; and ate not till the middle of the day. This summer-

house—small, and totally uninteresting in itself—is, I trust, standing even now. I dare scarcely ask the question, for it was seated in the same county in which a man—silent for ever be his odious name!—pulled down Shakspeare's house, that he might not be troubled with visitors. It stands in a county but little addicted to enthusiasm, and guilty of indifference even to her highest honours. Who but the natives of Warwickshire would permit a railroad to be carried within less than a gunshot of the ruins of Kenilworth,—those once silent and proud mementos of the Leicesters, and the Clintons, and the Lancasters,—of Scott,—of Amy Robsart,—of Elizabeth? What, indeed, would old Laneham say? However, let us not bemoan ourselves too much on that matter, when we recall that a railroad darts through the midst of Edinburgh, cuts beneath the Castle Mound, desecrates the Old Town by its vulgar proximity; that its volleys of smoke will soon tint the summit of the Scott monument, and ascend even to the columns of the Caalton. To return to Hatton.

A plentiful, though, except soup, cold repast was spread, and we all sat down. This sounds very simple; but you know not, degenerate moderns, by what ceremonies that very act of sitting down was prefaced. But let me, first, take a review of my company. It consisted, with the exception of one or two elderly single ladies, of the young; of the weaker sex, all; excepting, also, two brothers, well known as the almost inseparable friends of Dr. Parr,—and his was no ordinary friendship.

The Reverend John, commonly called "Jack Bartlam," was a man to whom no one would address that term of familiarity, except Dr. Parr; and to whom no one could apply it, save in the kindness of long intimacy, —never, in disrespect or derision. The days of Jack, Will, and Ned, are gone out; and with them much of the true and hearty friendship which expressed itself in the absence of trifling forms. It is not that our hearts are *much* colder than they were; it is not that we are more independent of the affections,—it is that we are more fastidious; civilisation has done that for us which will never be undone; we are the children of luxury, even where the intellect and the feelings are concerned. This is the age of sneering; we must have every one perfect; strong, yet elegant in mind; finished even in manners; without a spot upon which the finger of Ridicule can place her thin and freezing finger, which withers where it touches.

Think not this is the prelude of apology for him whose honest name I write with a solemn feeling of sadness, respect, and affection. An accomplished scholar, an earnest pastor, a liberal friend, a charitable judge of others, "Jack" needs no apologist: he possessed, too, the true good-breeding of that school we call old, but which, like the yew-tree in the churchyard is ever green, among the considerate and the intellectual. Alike in the presence of the peer, or of the peasant, "Jack" was the courteous, I do not say polished English gentleman. Courtesy springs from the com-

bination of certain feelings; polish is the effect of certain habits: yet do not infer that he was coarse; he had only one misfortune—he was *fat*.

How often have I looked at that well-formed, even handsome, somewhat Roman countenance, with that ineffably kind eye, and wished it had been placed upon a nobler pedestal, a form six feet high, instead of five feet eight; an erect, thin, compact figure, instead of that short, stout, even somewhat bulky frame, which seemed never yet to have met with the heaven-born tailor intended to fit it; for Jack's coats were excellent in cloth and quality, but loose as many men's principles. His countenance was, indeed, comely; and, as the Doctor would often whisper to some young favourite, "Jack had been a handsome man." He was then about forty-eight, quite in years;—endowed with a good living, a competent fortune, a thoroughly independent character; he was one of the few who loved Dr. Parr for his own sake, not of the many, who sought to borrow from the sun the beams which are only refracted when they fall upon bright substances. Jack was useful, but not subservient; and thoroughly understood the Doctor's character, adored his talents, worshipped his Greek and Latin, and gloried in his society. I confess, I see no degradation in such a true, hearty, enduring hero-worship as this. There is something consolatory, and ennobling to one's apprehension of human nature, to see a deep, and even somewhat abject affection, independent of the ties of blood, but resting solely upon the high

qualities of the one, and the capacity for admiring of the other. It never degraded "Jack."

I mentioned "Jack" as a clergyman. He was one of the old school in that respect, a true lover of his Church, sound, orthodox, and decided, but not illiberal and snarling; compounding for the

"Sins he is inclined to,
By damning those he has no mind to."

In particular, he was liberal on the subject of port wine. Now, the days of port wine clergymen are gone by, undoubtedly; and I tremble while I write, to think how Jack may be condemned by those who are at this moment ordering their boiled light pudding for dinner; and who are contributing to the ruin of cattle-dealers, and to the undue elevation of the fishmonger above his fellow-men. Now, if Jack had a fault, it was in carrying his liberal notions on the score of housekeeping too far,—never to intemperance in drinking, but to a perhaps blameable luxury in the pleasures of the table. But for this he paid a retribution in the bulk of a figure which had never been graceful, and in a tendency to apoplectic disease, which ended abruptly and awfully in sudden death. I do not mean in this to hold him up as an example; only a few words to my fasting friends. With all this latitude (which I seek not to excuse,) Jack managed to maintain peace, to receive respect, to preach the gospel, to obtain a holy and permanent influence over his parish. Disputes were referred to him, who never said an angry word, nor

quarrelled about tithes, nor tempted the demon, which seems to rise up even at the funeral of the abjured Dissenter in the present day, nor had long correspondence with his parishioners, with whom he had little to correspond about: and yet Jack was an absolute stickler for everything that was seemly, correct, and reverential in our Church service.

No man read the prayers of the Church so well. He was, as Dr. Parr affirmed, a perfect master of the English language in composition; he breathed it forth in the fullest, purest, and richest tones; he gave to every word, so pregnant in sense, (compiled as our Liturgy was in days when our language was in its height of purity, and consequent force,) an earnest, effectual intonation. On this account, Dr. Parr, conscious of his own defect in speech, always assigned to Jack the reading of any peculiarly solemn service. On such occasions, especially on the burial of the dead, Jack was sent for. He rode over from Alcester, where he resided, to Hatton; and I think I see his overalls and leather gaiters now, jogging away, on a horse as well-fed and as fat as himself, on the road from Warwick. But Jack was a stranger to me on that eventful May-day when he undertook the arduous department of carving a hare, which he lauded with encomiums, well-turned in Latin and English. Just one word more touching the clergy, before I leave Jack. Why have not our modern clergymen,—strenuous, devout, blameless, as they generally are,—the art of managing their parishes as the good old fashioned host once had?

Is it that the spirit of disputation is among them; and that those whom it once possesses, like the devils of old, it teareth, impelling them to acts even of self-destruction?

At the bottom of the table, opposite to Jack, sat a tall, very handsome, very young man, of aristocratic breed, and what was, in those days, aristocratic ignorance, save of pugilism and cock-fighting. He was a pupil of the Doctor's, sent to be prepared for college. To look at him, you would suppose no refining process needful: the face was perfect,—of a fine aquiline, and of that clear, varying complexion which suits with a blue eye and light hair. I wonder what has become of him?—whether, in the soberising effect of time, the kindly qualities that spake in that eye, and the graceful endeavour to please—but only where he happened to like—have risen into respectable virtues, or been bestowed upon base companions, and finally drenched in that slough of dissoluteness into which it was feared he might fall. That day, he had only just been restored after some wild exploit, which had produced a grave and even vituperative rebuke from his preceptor. He looked sad and hardened, rather than humbled, and shy, and yet not sulky; and the contrast between his athletic youth and bright complexion, and the older men about him, was not more apparent than that between the comfortable, modest self-possession of Jack, and the majestic air of indefeasible right of Dr. Parr. What I much liked about Jack was his good-nature to this overgrown boy in disgrace,—his way of

pleading for him when C——overturned a decanter, and the Doctor scowled as if it were done on purpose, —his assurance that the mangled fowl sent away was too old to have been well carved,—his courteous yet dignified manner to the youth;—but I shall run on for ever if I write on the theme of Jack's kind acts.

Our repast was prefaced by ceremonials, to which I have alluded. A cup brimful of mulled wine was first pledged by the Queen of the May to the company, and then handed round, each lady being desired, as she passed it, to think of any one whom she liked best. Heavens! what blushes and sighs!—and from none more than from one worthy spinster of five-and-thirty, who was positively overpowered by her feelings. After this, an emphatic grace, beautifully worded by Dr. Parr, preceding, we sat down to the liberal, plain, fare before us, and forgot all considerations in the tumult of the knife and fork.

The evening ended with tea for the ladies, and a pipe for the Doctor. He always smoked, from choice, the coarsest tobacco; and I rushed out in a happy pause in an eloquent harangue, eager to find my post-chaise, and to proceed to Warwick.

CHAP. IX.

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

Allan Cunningham! The name, as I utter it, with a mournful solemnity, revives, not the dusty regions of the grim metropolis, not the saloons of art, nor the aristocratic bustle of the "private view," nor the studio of Chantrey, nor the scarcely less complete repose of the fireside of Wilkie — no! It conjures up images of the sweet, clear Nith, breaking and brackling over its stony bed, as it hastens to the Solway, laving, as it goes, the banks whereon Burns wandered, and where the youth of Cunningham was passed in day-dreams of those high imaginings which bespeak an old age of celebrity.

He was born somewhere in Nithsdale; I cannot say where. I don't mean to be a biographer. I do not like the race! — an egotistical, self-seeking, class of writers, who let you into all that you do not want to know, and cheat you of those vital inquiries — those researches into the heart — those speculations which you would give worlds to answer. Biographer! The very name implies a certain portion of self-deception, and

bespeaks a wilful blindness to defects, or a depraved determination to do what is called justice: which justice consisteth in disclosing the littleness, the foibles of the dead man; ripping up his every day delinquencies, or candidly revealing his pecuniary distresses. Who was ever satisfied with the biography of any friend? Who ever knew the portrait when it was drawn? Who ever did not wish that the loved and lamented one had been left alone in the dim obscurity of a nameless grave? Let me touch on one or two bright exceptions. I do not deny the excessive, odious merits of Boswell; but wish you to know men as they are? Read the "Life of Crabbe," by his son; or of "Cowper," by Southey. There stand the poets — not sitting for their pictures with a book in one hand, a ring on the other—but in their every-day dresses, with their every-day feelings, their mild, and child-like failings (the weaknesses of angels' natures wedded to mortality), their sorrows, their sympathies, their errors, touched with a true but gentle and respectful hand, are engraven on the memory of the heart for ever — that is, if you peruse the volumes slowly, and in calm moments — not at the will of Hookham, nor of Cawthorn — not under the ban of those awful ministers to intellect; no: half-a-sovereign will purchase these treasures to the lovers of portraiture; don't borrow, don't hire; have them, to hold and to keep, to be yours, and to be enjoyed whilst you have eyes to read, or a heart to feel.

For there are the real men — Cowper, the suffering, the stricken, the delicately-vain, the somewhat over-

petted idol of woman, the religious enthusiast, the rigid moralist, the weak, the erring, the penitent, stands before you. You behold him in his season of hope,—hope chequered with many shadows. You fancy you hear him laughing and causing to laugh with the fair cousins, who—Lady Hesketh the one, the loved and lost one of his heart the other—were his destiny; and you trace him, with an intellect more and more frequently obscured, reason's light flickering more and more, until at last all is dark. Oh, that a fate so similar should have been his, the noblest of all modern prose-writers, who penned the domestic romance of Cowper's history! Oh that Southey's age should have ended in the gloom of that intellectual night which his magic pencil portrayed — a saint-like sympathy pervading the whole — when he wrote the "Life of Cowper." There is one passage (let me hasten from this engrossing subject) which, let any one who has never known the mystery of fond and hopeless attachment, read without tears. I, with my autumnal hair, my grown-up nieces, that villanous thing that would even call me "great uncle," could it speak,—even I cannot. It is the *true* tale of Cowper's life darkly hinted forth in the elegant egotism of Hayley's narrative, but told with simple pathos by Southey. The cousin is beloved — the dire malady, hereditary perchance, visits the poet. The first fatal attack of insanity blights him for ever. The conscientious father, Lord Cowper, forbids the engagement — the lovers separate. Years afterwards, when

all intercourse had long ceased, when those once all-in-all were dead to each other — dead, but without the resignation that follows real death, — when nothing but a few exquisite lines, written with that subdued feeling which touches more than passionate sorrow, had referred to the mind unstrung, the jarring chords which none but his Maker's hand could restore, — when all hope, every wish even, perhaps again to meet were gone,— the poet receives from some unknown hand the present of a desk, costly and commodious: he guesses the giver and is silent, but the gift spoke volumes of the wounded and constant heart " fixed in its love, though hopeless," which had chosen this means of considering the comforts of the library of one who was never supplanted in her remembrance by a happier lover. No! the wounded spirit, the humble fortunes of the poet were never saddened by her choice of any other being. They met not! a tacit agreement that any interview, even when time had softened all lights and shadows of their destiny, *must* be painful, might be injurious, was never broken—perhaps by the dead father's wise decree—and she had but the poor consolation of knowing that her sister Lady Hesketh's tenderest cares watched over him —and of thinking that when he wrote upon that desk, he would remember *her*. The father was right—the event proved that Cowper ought never to have married; but *why* did they not meet again, when the calmness of a friendship with the tenderness, without the hopes of love, had succeeded to the impatient fondness of youth?

I leave the tribes of prudent fathers and anxious mothers to answer the question.

I recur, as from a painful dream, to the remembrance of Cunningham. In the south of Scotland, in that region which bears the name of Nithsdale, or, as the native pronunciation has it, Niddesdale, he was born. I have an impression that his father was a stone-cutter in Dumfries; but the family could trace their descent from a good old stock, and could say, with Bishop Watson, that their mere ancestors were "neither hewers of wood, nor drawers of water;" for that exalted Christian bishop by no means laid aside his pride of birth on the altar of humility.

I cannot expatiate in true biographical style, if I would, on Allan Cunningham's origin. He was the last man to require birth—the last on whom the adventitious gifts of fortune could cast a lustre. That he wandered in his childhood,—emerging from the town of Dumfries (or dwelling, I have a notion, in some hill-side farmer's cot during a portion of his youthful days) to where the lowly farmstead of Ellisland is immortalised by its having once been tenanted by Burns, is certain. He must have rambled many a day — indeed, I have heard him describe the scene — to a secluded seat, almost overhanging the river Nith, which Burns called his Hermitage, and in which many of the sonnets of that poet were written. It is now half grown over, as you approach it, with long grass, and the lower branches of trees obscure it; and I almost defy you, without a guide, to find the spot. Beneath it, on a sort of plain,

around which murmurs the Nith, lies a fair white house, seated in what is called the Friar's Carse, or (for Cockney readers,) meadow. The Friar's Carse inhabitants — for so the place is called — were Burns's nearest neighbours in his days of decline and coming ruin at Ellisland: and here, too, wandered Allan Cunningham — and these local associations, and these woodland haunts gave to the rising poet the food for his fancy, whilst they furnished also to him whose sun was well-nigh set, the library of the book of Nature. Retiring from Ellisland, Burns would shelter himself from the cares of his unsuccessful farm, in the Hermitage; and for hours, nought but the mournful symphonies of the wood-pigeon, or the thrush's noon-day song would disturb the reveries of a mind over which sorrow held its poetic sway. And here, too, the youthful hopes, and the virtuous affections of Allan Cunningham were indulged in pensive, but not mournful rambles, as his tall and majestic figure might be seen some Sabbath evening, perchance, emerging from a winding path, and standing by the river side.

The Friar's Carse has been immortalised for a reason even nobler than its proximity to Ellisland. Its last tenant has given to its unpretending features, its low site, its simple and sylvan beauties, an interest to every compassionate heart. Let me first expatiate one *little* minute on the Friar's Carse. Its present proprietor is Mrs. Crichton, the highly estimable widow of Dr. Crichton, who long was the neighbour of Burns at

Ellisland. Dr. Crichton died, and bequeathed to his widow a considerable sum of money to be employed as her judgment directed, in any charitable work. After much deliberation, she established the Crichton Institution—a lunatic establishment for the unfortunate of all classes. It stands upon a hill above Dumfries; the rich pay—the poor are received gratuitously; but all are soothed, relieved, if possible—all are benefited to a certain extent by the munificence which framed the Institution. A kindly spirit dwelt in that Friar's Carse, whereon Burns perhaps may have gazed from his Hermitage, with a somewhat of that soured and mistaken spirit of which his great mind was susceptible. He felt his inferiority of station. Allan Cunningham rose above it. The place, therefore, nourished two poets. It is full of what, in publishing parlance, would be called "their remains." The most touching memento of Burns lies, however, in the house in which he died, in Dumfries. I rather think they have named the street Burns Street. You leave the heavy, overloaded churchyard, full of vulgar monuments of baillies and burgesses, and proceed, asking some matron with unwashed hands, to show you the way into a narrow street. A bare-footed girl assures you "she is living there"—"she kens the verra hoose." You follow her, and turn into a dwelling wherein that incomprehensible sensation of infinite dirt around about you, in the air, on the floor, on the clothes and person of every one, is coupled with the remembrance of Burns. I wonder with what sensation Allan must have seen the spot!

To me it was indescribably mournful. I ascended three low steps, and, sooner than I expected, stood in the room where Burns died. It is a small, low apartment, corresponding to one similar in size on the opposite side of a narrow passage. A bed (unmade, of course, though it were noon-day), stood in one corner —*not* the poet's bed. Of him, not a vestige remains, save one:—not a stick of his is left—not a chair,—not a drinking-cup,—not a table,—not even a footstool, or a door-mat. Nothing is there in that house of dirt and wretchedness except one thing, that he ever touched, looked upon, or spoke of. The bell which he was wont to ring, and a dirty cord by which it is sounded, still are there. It is enough. No matter *what* object recalls to you the dead; perhaps the simpler the better. I looked at the bell—its occupation gone—for the present occupants of that house are below the ringing bells. I could fancy the poet's emaciated hand, as he stretched it out from his death-bed, to summon aid to the often repeated wants of the broken-hearted invalid. I dared not to sound it. It would have struck upon my ear like a knell; but the mute remembrance spoke to my fancy of long, weary hours of slow consuming disease, in that chamber so close upon the street,—so near to the inhuman sounds of Scottish female voices,—so humble,—so comfortless, and now, so loathed, if not forgotten. I gave the shoeless lass, who stared at me with all her eyes, a sixpence with a grudge, and quitted the house, repeating with a groan his own mournful words:—

"Apart let me wander, apart let me muse,—
How quick Time is flying, how quick Fate pursues!
How long we have lived, and how long lived in vain!
How little of life's scanty space may remain!"

I wandered down by the quay, passing through the foreign-looking streets of the town in disgust. Could not the good burgesses of Dumfries for pity's sake have bought up the humble furniture, once the poet's—the bed which his creditors threatened to take from beneath him as he lay dying—the old arm-chair of his wife? Would not some twenty or thirty pounds have done it all, and have left the last hour of Nature's darling as it was when his excellent widow sank to rest, cherishing her fond pride of him to the last? I am answered—they did not so; and the best and most touching memento of a great man—his daily habitation, his books, his chair, his Bible—are dispersed, heaven knows where! Whilst a lumbering monument which he would have spurned and satirised had he been alive rises within the churchyard of St. Michael's.

I have heard it remarked that Allan Cunningham bore some slight resemblance to Burns in countenance. I do not believe it: they resembled each other only in the fervent and innate poetic feeling,—only in the simple tastes and lowly origin. Nature, through his ancestry, endowed Allan Cunningham with a powerful, stalwart frame,—a body that would have borne armour with ease—a chest broad—an arm strong—limbs that seemed made for immortality, or, at all events, for old age. I lived to see him lay his hand on that arm of

iron, and say, with faltering voice—"My arm—I cannot use it now!"

In the essential characteristics of their minds, Burns and Cunningham differed entirely. Burns was a creature of self-indulgence—Allan, of principle, and consequent wholesome restraint. The romance of Burns's fancy was fevered and sullied by passion. The purity of Cunningham was the same in the season of his youth as in the chastened period of his hallowed and respected age. In fact, although they have often absurdly been compared, there is no parallel to be drawn between these two men, either in character or in genius. In genius, indeed, Burns was one of the few—Cunningham of the many. Burns was of the few who are lent for a while to irradiate their century—to blaze, burn, expire. Allan, one of the many, endowed with high poetic taste, but not with the genius that rushes, like the torrent, over every point and pinnacle of craggy rocks, leaving such an impression on the mind as never dies. Cunningham was like the gentler Scottish *burn*, the streamlet whose clearness scarcely hides the green moss as it flows with a delicious sound, making the banks verdant as it passes, descends the miniature cascade, flows on, and is forgotten.

To his powerful frame, a head of suitable proportions was Nature's gift to Cunningham. An ample forehead, deep-set, thoughtful eyes, that beamed with kindness when he spoke, broad, Scottish cheeks, homely, yet characteristic features, an unelevated nose, a mouth wide and smiling,—these were the lineaments of the

poet. I have sometimes thought, as I looked at him from the length of a drawing-room, a crowd of London men with their canes and chapeaux, and of London bare shoulders and ringlets intervening, that he had the air of an old Covenanter, and might have emerged just then, and been in good keeping with the place, from the Souter's Hole in Crickop Linn, the scene of Balfour of Burleighs' supposed escape, and the scene, too, of many a meeting, and many a preaching of the poor Covenanters, when they clung to the rocks, and were fired upon by English troopers. *There*, indeed, should Allan have been placed, his fine bald head, the locks combed down on either side, as he wore them, his form riding amid the dark crevices of those overgrown rocks, or bending above the winding stream, wearing its way into deep and tortuous channels as it wanders. There —where Walter Scott, led by the accomplished owner of the Linn, long mused, stood apart—noted the minutiæ of the place in his mind, and again and again reviewed the singular windings of the Linn; and, finally, placed in the Souter's Hole, or seat, whence the Souter, or cobbler, preacher of the Covenanters, used to harangue his congregation, clothing the sides of the chasm—there he placed Balfour of Burleigh in his cavern. The very curved tree by which he climbed bends still over the Linn,—for taste, the love of nature, the love of history, have preserved the Crickop Linn to the remembrance of Scott, of his Covenanters, of Balfour of Burleigh, and even of Allan Cunningham.

For here *his* footsteps must also have lingered. 'Tis

not a day's journey, nor half a day's, from Dumfries; and to such scenes, that form, and that face, and the mind which animated them, were far better adapted than the saloons of London.

Do not mistake me: I mean not that Allan Cunningham did not grace the drawing-room—he *did.* Amid all that was frivolous, much that seemed like heartlessness, much that was over-fine, much that was tame, his calm countenance and imposing stature rose in wholesome contrast. It reminded you that something there was stable—that *all* was not folly. It was like viewing an ancient, well-built tower, that had stood the work of time, and could stand the brunt of future ages, amid a crowd of gimcrack villas, every angle of which announced premature decay. In deportment, Allan was staid, dignified, and not without condescension. His was the manly bearing of conscious intellect. There was no assumption; there was no subserviency. I defy any man to have insulted, or looked him down,—any woman, even though she be of the half-aristocratic breed, which is ever insolent, to have said a pert thing to him. Nature had ennobled him: he was not merely a gentleman; at her bidding he was something more. I have seen him in the crowds of Kensington Palace, where the Duke of Sussex lent his royal grace to charm and to enliven even the dull and proud, stand like an isolated oak amid a thicket of saplings. I have detected the littleness of passing as a mere acquaintance the helpmate of Chantrey; but he was not long isolated. "Come here, Allan," said the

Duke to him one evening, passing his arm through that of the poet: the crowd drew back—the Prince of the Blood and the son of the stone-cutter passed on: but Allan's calm and innate dignity received no shock. His eye glistened, as it ever did when a kind thing was said or done; but his Covenanter-looking head could carry the intoxicating draught of royal favour, and feel no ill effects.

The first time I saw Allan Cunningham was when I visited Chantrey's studio with two wilful cousins of mine, now grave mammas. They vowed they would be introduced to him; I washed my hands of the transaction. They declared that I should introduce them: I protested I could not—I had never seen him. They were young, handsome, and determined. What could I do? As we entered the gallery, out spoke the elder to the attendant of the chamber, "Pray is not Allan Cunningham, the poet, here?" The man hesitated: after a moment's reflection, "Yes, ma'am, Mr. Cunningham. Do you wish to see him?" "Tell him," cried my younger torment, hanging on my left arm, "some ladies from—whose name shall we say?" looking at me. "Oh!—from Mr. Wilkie,—wish to see him." Hereupon ensued a parley: "My dear ——, how can you? Suppose he should not know Mr. Wilkie; besides, I do not feel at liberty to use Wilkie's name." "Hush!" cried L——, (I won't betray, even to her daughters, the grave matron who would be shocked if the very youngest of them were

to do the like), "Hush! who is this grave man in a pinafore coming towards us?"

Covered with a sort of apron, or pinafore, such as good, old-fashioned cooks used to put on while cooking, a small chisel in his hand, his face wearing a puzzled look, and emerging from behind a half-finished monument, came forth Allan Cunningham. There was that in his manner which rebuked assurance; but as I muttered, blushing for my own weakness, blushing for the effrontery of my fair cousins, the name of Wilkie, his countenance relaxed into a smile. "Ah! Wilkie? He's away to Scotland," was his answer. Possibly he might have been away to New Zealand—I had not seen him for these three months. "These ladies," I muttered in reply, "were so desirous of seeing you, Mr. Cunningham;" he bowed his stately head slightly. "There are some very pretty things here," he returned in his broad Scotch—the broadest Scotch—a Scotch never diluted by the slightest approach to English—a Scotch just intelligible, and that is all.

He led us, as he spoke, to some of the unfinished productions of Chantrey. As we conversed, and the enthusiasm of my companions broke forth; and as, inch by inch, we betrayed that we had gone partly, only, to see the sculpture, chiefly to see the poet, he warmed into friendliness. The fame of a poet was nearest to his heart. His occupation under Chantrey, by no means an uncongenial one, as I have understood, could not alienate the early rambler over the classic scenes of Ellisland from his true love. Exquisite are

Cunningham's early productions; and when I knew him he was still a poet.

The acquaintance thus fraudulently formed, became one of those which never languished, although often interrupted. Worthy of being born in Nithsdale, worthy of dwelling in the same country whence Lucy Countess of Nithsdale issued forth, the heroine of domestic life, at the peril of death, to rescue her lord, Cunningham had a steady, constant, Scottish heart. The English may be warmer than the Scotch, but they are more capricious. Cunningham was always the same—at least to me; his name is coupled in my memory with that of L. E. L., of Wilkie, and Chantrey, and many of less note, but of pleasant memory. One touch more; let me rub up my palettes for the last shades, and then let the memory of this good man rest, as far as my pen is concerned, unmolested.

I have described his appearance; I have attempted to describe his expression of countenance: it is far more difficult to give any notion of his conversation. It was not brilliant, but emphatic and original; never overbearing in argument, yet he knew how to maintain his point with Scottish determination. He never said a discourteous thing; he never uttered a vulgar remark. Religion, virtue, sincerity, were never outraged with impunity in his presence. I do not know that I ever felt quite easy with Allan Cunningham. Perhaps, to speak humanly, partly because he was so tall. I felt I was looked down upon. I always entertained a deep respect, not only for his intellect, but for his

height. Conversation, like a shuttlecock, rebounds from battledore to battledore, when the players are well matched; but could not act upon a church steeple. Another drawback was, not only that Scotch accent, but that Scotch mind. Our North-o'-the-Tweedites have no notion themselves, good folk, how uncommonly unlike they are to English people. Beginning the world upon porridge, instead of bread and milk, the same dissimilarity goes on through life. They are endowed with extra powers to pronounce those hard names which drive one mad, and with ears framed to understand each other when they speak their head-cracking language. They are lovers of anecdote, and even of long stories; and it requires an apprenticeship to listen to them with effect. When I say, therefore, that Allan's discourse was peculiarly Scotch, I need no further describe it.

The last time I saw him was in Chantrey's studio; we spoke of L. E. L. "I loved her," he said with emphasis; "Mrs. Cunningham had a vast respect for her too." His voice faltered, his speech was even then slightly impaired by a shock of that malady which laid that tall form low, — his arm, his left arm, was enfeebled. The axe was laid to the root of the tree — *his* days were numbered. "Puir lassie!" he said, the tears moistening his eyes; "why did she go?" He uttered the words with that deep feeling with which *her* fate inspired all who were worthy of remembering her. The gallery was silent, the hour was early, there was something solemn in his tones. Little, to speak

generally, was Allan Cunningham shaken by the attack which had paralysed his arm; his form was still erect. Wilkie was then living; he had heard from him; — he was "well." In a year or more that gallery, so silent then, was still as death; for Death, pointing to the unfinished works, said, "Stop there!" Chantrey had been summoned by imperative decree; Wilkie was no more. Cunningham, ere yet the marbles had received their last touches from his hands, ere he had obeyed the behest of his friend that all should be completed, had yielded up *his* spirit at his Maker's call.

CHAP. X.

PUBLISHERS AND AUTHORS.

It was loftily asserted by Caxton, when he printed his *Booke of Eneydos*, that his work was not intended for the simple, but for the gentle; "not," to borrow his own words, "for a rude, uplandish man, to labour therein, nor read it, but only for a clerke and a noble gentleman, that feeleth and understandeth in feats of arms, in love, and in noble chivalry."

These notions of the aristocratic printer have long been as obsolete as his language. In his day, the craft of printing and the profession of publishing were necessarily viewed with a deep respect, of which the altered habits of succeeding generations have changed the grounds. The clergy were, in the earliest era of revived literature, our printers, publishers, and authors; for the three characters were usually conjoined. A clerkly education, a scholastic seclusion, and access to a princely fortune, generally supplied by some patronising noble, qualified a man in those days for the business of a publisher.

In the sixteenth century, the higher orders were proud to engage in the great work of disseminating the know-

ledge of which their lordly ancestors had enjoyed only a dim vision. Translations from the classics, chronicles, Italian and French romances, and religious works, were thus given to the English public; to which succeeded primers, catechisms, and dictionaries. Then arose an universal cry for Bibles, followed by a demand for works of science and of law; under the pressure of which, the Holy Scriptures first, and by and by the statutes of the realm, put on respectively an English dress, and became intelligible to the people. Wolsey saw the stream of light widening and widening, and, grand and far-sighted as he was, lent his assistance to the high cause: in vain did the Tudor monarchs attempt to restrain the awakened love of letters by giving to individuals the exclusive right of printing; it was too late, even for their power, to quench the thirst of inquiry. They dared not avail themselves of their often abused authority to restrain the publication of works. "There is no law," observes Selden, "to prevent the printing of any book in England, but only a decree of the Star Chamber."

Some beautiful instances of a disinterested promulgation of learning occurred among the earliest printers and publishers, both in England and on the Continent. At Venice there might be seen the celebrated Aldus Manutius, the founder of the Aldine press, and the inventor of the Italic letter, now lecturing on the classics, now retiring to his closet to compose works of great learning, which he printed and dispersed even before the year 1500. Nor did this ornament to his

honourable profession derive any pecuniary benefit from his labours. No: he sacrificed, on the contrary, a large fortune in the cause of learning, affording a home and sustenance, at his own cost, to many poor but distinguished contemporaries.

Independently of these lets and hindrances to the accomplishment of their great object, the early publishers were exposed to heavy losses through piracies and forgeries. Indeed, it was the frequency of such frauds which led to the adoption of symbols,— such as the anchor and dolphin, prefixed by Aldus to his printed works; the two triangles crossed, by William Fagues and Wynkyn de Worde; and the figure 4, which was adopted by Siberel, the celebrated introducer of the art into the University of Cambridge.

Notwithstanding the patronage of the nobility, and the efforts of the clergy, the publication of works was retarded by the troublous state of Europe during the sixteenth century. Ariosto, as is well known, published his "Orlando Furioso" on his own account. After paying all expenses, he realised little more than a shilling a copy for his work. He was unfortunate, moreover, in the patron whom he selected: he dedicated his production to Cardinal Hippolito. "Where," exclaimed the Utilitarian prelate, after perusing the exquisite and soul-stirring poem, "can the man have contrived to pick up such a mass of absurdities?" But the world avenged the poet, and convicted the cardinal — with reverence be it spoken — of stupidity. A brilliant popularity was the portion of Ariosto, even in his

earliest days of publication. "There is," wrote the elder Tasso to his aspiring and gifted son, "no mechanic, no girl, no old man, who is satisfied to read the 'Orlando Furioso' once. The poem serves as the solace of the traveller, who, fatigued on his journey, deceives his lassitude by chanting some octaves of this poem. You may hear them sing these stanzas in the streets and in the fields every day." But a dark era was still to be encountered, endured, and surmounted, by the lettered and scientific portion of the community. At Rome, the great Galileo stood to take his trial before a tribunal of inquisitors, as profoundly ignorant as any Cardinal Hippolito. Their self-satisfied folly, aided by superstition, accelerated his doom. "Are these, then, my judges?" was his exclamation. Not many years afterwards that lofty spirit was subdued. Imprisonment, old age, torture, did their work; and the philosopher, after recanting and condemning his own book, retired to his prison for life. Milton visited him there: the beautiful and then prosperous youth, in his dawn of fame, mourned over the dying philosopher, "old and poor." But the worst era for science and for letters was to come. The manuscripts of Galileo, bequeathed to his widow, fell under her confessor's revision; and the pious zeal of that worthy destroyed what the Inquisition had spared. Such parts of those noble writings as *he* deemed not fitted for the benefit of mankind were committed to the flames. The lesson operated, no doubt, upon thousands; liberty of opinion was no safe luxury in those days. Nevertheless, in England, the art of printing, at least,

suffered no blight from persecution; it rose to its highest point under the auspices of Wynkyn de Worde, who, whatever may be his right to dispute with Richard Ferguson the merit of having first made use of the Roman letter in England, is the undoubted founder in this country of the Gothic type. De Worde, whose busy home was to be found at the sign of the Golden Sun, in the parish of St. Bride, Fleet Street, united in his own person all the mechanical portions of a book-maker. He was a stationer, a bookbinder, a printer, and publisher. Thus occupied he had no time to waste upon authorship, though, like most of our early printers, he read much, and was a Protestant. The case was otherwise with another printer, Martello, the brother-in-law of Sir Thomas More. This individual could scarcely avoid standing forth as a zealous defender of the old faith: he appears to have been a scholar and a gentleman. His office was to be found at "Fowls Gate," next to Cheapside, where, from the year 1517 to 1536, he printed and put forth his law books.

Let it not be supposed, however, that, even under the highest patronage, the profession of a publisher and printer, now so generally leading to reputation and wealth, was in those days accompanied by honour only. Persecution raged all over Europe. At Rouen, in one of the dreary recesses of that grim old town, was burned to death the unfortunate Hussee, a printer, whose crime was that he distributed pamphlets advocating the tenets of the Reformed Church.

During the reign of Edward VI. the University of

Oxford was doomed to witness that famous conflagration of books, which was intended to annihilate superstition and idolatry, by the destruction of all works containing the insignia of image-worship; all invocations to saints, all names of Popish worthies. Under the act which enforced this destructive measure, the libraries of Westminster and Oxford were ransacked and purified; but, as might be expected, the ore was sacrificed as well as the dross. Pious Protestant zeal destroyed many rare works for the sake of the rich clasps and bindings, which were ordered to be saved; and the University, trembling for its own safety, beheld with silent consternation illuminated manuscripts cast into the flames, any book that had red letters upon it exciting to its height the wrath of the populace. One cannot but sorrow over the enumeration of antiphones, missals, pailes, processionals, legends, portuasses, journals, ordinals, for ever lost to society, and to a country but lately awakened to the deep interest of antiquarian lore. The deed was worthy of Puritan times.

During the dark reign of Mary—and, it must be also acknowledged, in that of her brother and predecessor—no works but dry controversial treatises were published; romance and poetry were forgotten; the publishing craft was, therefore, on the decline. Mysteries and moralities were restored, to become the vehicles of amusement, combined with moral instruction—in short, literature suffered by the Reformation; because after the rapine of the monasteries had once begun, the avarice and rapacity of the courtiers brought

discredit upon their pretext of zeal for the distribution of knowledge, and furnished the Romanist clergy with a plea for connecting letters with impiety and rapacity.

Still, however, the publishers continued to be men of influence. Grafton, who was appointed by Edward VI. king's printer, was both a scholar and an author. After printing a magnificent edition of Hall's "Chronicle," he published his own abridgment of the "Chronicles;" and he held his course, diversified, it must be owned, by occasional imprisonment and threatened penalties in Edward's time, yet on the whole in tolerable security, his domicile being in one of the dissolved monasteries, a house of the Grey Friars, afterwards given by Edward VI. for a school, and known to every Englishman as Christ's Hospital.

The controversy between the Episcopalians and the Puritans in the reign of Elizabeth kept up the trade and the spirits of the printers; and still were they educated men, often preachers, as in the case of Crowley, and sometimes physicians as well as publishers. Life was then longer than it now is; it must have been; there must have been more hours to the day, more minutes to the hour. In modern times, what publisher could have leisure to deliver a sermon, or composure to feel a pulse? In one or two instances, as in that of William Degard, the friend of Milton, we find the occupation of publisher and printer conjoined to that of schoolmaster — a still more arduous destiny. But the patents of printing continued during the reign of Elizabeth in their full force, and, restraining the efforts of

the speculative in this branch of trade, were justly regarded as great hardships.

It is remarkable, that the introduction of newspapers on the Continent should have preceded the publication of Shakspeare's plays only by a year. Newspapers, as every one knows, were first invented by a French physician, who found it his interest to amuse his patients by telling them the news. The avidity with which his daily gossip was received, engendered the hope that, if collected and printed, it might do more than reconcile his patients to the ever unwelcome visits of their doctor. Monsieur le Docteur Renaudot, for thus was he styled, applied, therefore, to Cardinal Richelieu for a patent, and the first number of the "Paris Gazette" appeared in 1622. In 1623 Shakspeare's plays were given to an English public. The original edition, printed by Isaac Taggard and Edward Blount, and still that most prized by book-collectors, fell, however, almost still-born from the press, and in forty years after the publication only a thousand copies had been sold. Profit was neither anticipated nor received by the two enterprising friends who rescued these incomparable productions from partial oblivion, or garbled editions; for, as they expressed themselves in their dedication to the Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, they "had but collected them, and done an office to the dead, to procure his orphans guardians, without ambition either of self-profit or fame; only to keep the memory of so worthy a friend and fellow alive as was our Shakspeare." Thus, to friendship was owing the preservation of dramas which a

century afterwards would have established the reputation of any publisher. But literature, as it has been well observed, never advanced "until she walked upon her own legs," or, rather, until the system of patronage yielded to the force of public opinion.

Another oppressive and invidious foe to the publisher was the licenser of the press, a functionary against whom Milton was the first to declaim. "Debtors," he remarks in his "Areopagitica," "and delinquents, walk about without a keeper, but inoffensive books must not stir forth without a visible gaoler." He spoke feelingly; —for his own works were mutilated alike by the stern Republican and the zealous Loyalist.

The halcyon days of literature were, however, at hand. The Augustine age was approaching, when the publisher was no longer to be affrighted by Star Chamber decrees, but, destined to act a prominent part in society, was to be rewarded not only by the approval of a lettered few, but by wealth, condition, and power. During the latter part of the seventeenth century it had been deemed a mark of high breeding to affect a contempt for letters; and the unworthy affectation continued until the influence of periodical literature,—the "Spectator" more especially,—rendered light reading fashionable; and from that era authors had no longer their works mutilated; publishers who, in olden times, had sometimes figured in the pillory for an imprudent publication, walked about in independence, and printers flourished in proportion to the liberty and prosperity of their betters.

The qualifications of scholarship and of gentle birth, once thought essential for a publisher, were, it is grievous to reflect, remitted, as the sphere of speculation widened. Our publishers of the eighteenth century were no longer the Martells, the De Wordes, the Graftons of their day. Thomas Guy, the founder of Guy's Hospital, was originally a carpenter, and, what was singular, he retained his penurious coarseness of habits even whilst his heart expanded with benevolence, and when his purse was employed in vast schemes of philanthropy. He began his publishing career with a capital of two hundred pounds only, his province being the supply of Bibles to the University of Oxford; and he was to be seen, in his days of affluence, dining on his shop-counter, an old newspaper for his table-cloth, and dressed in the most ancient and dilapidated of garments. Of greater refinement were the two Churchills, John and Amersham, the publishers of Locke's "Essays." They were men of a wise liberality; and such was their influence and respectability, that Amersham sat in Parliament for Dorchester, and his son intermarried with the noble houses of Warwick and of Strafford.

Rivalling Jacob Tonson were the father and son, Bernard and Henry Lintot, the former preserved to posterity in the "Dunciad." They sprang from an honest yeoman's family at Horsham, in Sussex; nor was it until wealth began to follow their exertions that Bernard endeavoured, as most men do in such circumstances, to trace the origin of his race; or, in the contemptuous words of Humphrey Warder, the genealo-

gist, he "wanted to turn gentlefolks," and began "inquiring after arms." According, however, to Pope's celebrated letter upon the elder Lintot, gentility was denied to that eminent man. Pope's description of him riding a stone horse in Windsor Forest, with a "pretty boy" after him, both lent to him by Mr. Oldmixon, the boy being a printer's devil, a "smutty dog yesterday," whose face it took two hours to wash, but "a well-conditioned devil, and very forward in his Catiline," has been eulogised for its graphic humour. The greatest proof of Lintot's dulness was his daring to trust himself to the tender mercies of Pope; yet he threw himself unconsciously open to the great satirist's civil and varnished venom, as he drew the poor man out to expose the worldliness of a vulgar mind. "If my son were but big enough to go on with the business, I would keep," said the publisher, "as good company as Tonson," his "redoubtable rival." His never forgetting his "Miscellany," but recommending Pope to turn an ode of Horace as they rested under the beech trees; his observing how good a "Miscellany" the poet might make even at his spare moments; were all food for the little man's latent contempt, and aided, doubtless, to Lintot's fatal pre-eminence in the "Dunciad." When Curll and Lintot encounter in the race in honour of the Goddess of Dulness, Lintot is the victor: —

"But lofty Lintot in the circle rose;
This prize is mine — who tempt it are my foes."

Perhaps Pope could never forgive — who could? —

the pitiful compensation which he received from Lintot for some of his works; the first edition of the "Rape of the Lock" being purchased for seven pounds, "Windsor Forest" for twenty pounds, the "Essay on Criticism" for fifteen. But, on the whole, Pope had, as times went, no reason to complain, his works realising four thousand two hundred and forty-four pounds

Pope's dislike to Lintot is said to have been owing chiefly to the unfortunate publisher's being a stout man — a contrast to the small, ill-conditioned Pope — and no scholar: —

"Wide as a windmill all his figure spread."

But if Pope's letter be credited, Lintot must have added the insolence of prosperity to the crime of stupidity. Thus freely did he speak of the sacred band of translators, men in those days of far more importance, as far as classical learning went, than in our own: —

"Pray, Mr. Lintot," cried the poet (one may fancy his smile, his wicked eye, his weak voice), "now you talk of translators, what is your method of managing them?"

"Sir," cried the publisher, "these are the saddest pack of rogues in the world; in a hungry fit they'll swear they understand all the languages in the universe. I have known one of them take down a Greek book upon my counter, and cry, 'Ah, this is Hebrew — I must read it from the latter end!'" The bookseller then proceeded to explain his plan of remuneration,

which, commencing with a payment of ten shillings a sheet, was conducted upon a system of astute comparison, not very easy, since the worthy bookseller understood neither Latin, French, nor Italian. .

Equally impertinent was Lintot's dealing with the critics. A lean man, "that looked like a very good scholar," presumed to shrug his shoulders over Pope's "Homer." He was rhapsodising when Mrs. Lintot summoned her husband to dinner.

"Sir," said Lintot, "will you please to eat a piece of beef with me?"

"Mr. Lintot," said the critic, "I am sorry you should be at the expense of this poet's book. I am really concerned on your account —— "

"Sir, I am much obliged to you. If you can dine upon a piece of beef, together with a slice of pudding —— "

"Mr. Lintot, I do not say but Mr. Pope, if he would condescend to advise with men of learning —— "

"Sir, the pudding is upon the table, if you choose to go in."

The critic dines, and the pudding is excellent, and the poem "commendable."

These few traits of what Pope calls the "genius of Mr. Lintot," ought not, perhaps, to injure very seriously the honest fame of that individual; but Lintot's ignorance shows to how low a standard the pretensions of a publisher had sunk. The "Dunciad," rescued from the fire by Swift, avenged Pope of some real or suspected wrongs; of one in particular which our

authors may with difficulty forgive, of making too free with the poet's name, especially in giving out, or at any rate insinuating, that Pope was concerned in reviewing and recommending Lintot's "Miscellany."

The Tonsons, on the other hand, had a high reputation for integrity, and liberality to authors. Jacob Tonson, the publisher of Dryden's works, was the son of a barber-surgeon in Holborn; he commenced his career as a publisher at Gray's Inn-gate, in partnership with his brother: Richard Tonson was secretary to the Kit-Cat Club, which, composed as it was of the most distinguished heroes and statesmen of the Whig party, thought it not unseemly to meet in Shire Lane, at the house of a pastry-cook named Christopher Cat, famous for his mutton-pies. There, associated with wits and politicians, the publisher, mercilessly satirised even by his own Dryden, appeared —

"With leering look, bull-necked, and freckled face."

Like Pope, Dryden ascribed another defect to Jacob Tonson, —

"With two left-legs, and Judas-coloured hair."

Alluding to the awkwardness of his gait, to which Pope also referred when he called him in the "Dunciad" "left-legged Tonson." According to Dryden, Tonson assumed to himself the sole merit of ushering what was good into the world, and usurped a monopoly of literary judgment: —

"I am the touchstone of all modern wit,
Without my stamp in vain you poets write;
These only purchase ever living fame
That in my 'Miscellany' plant their name."

It was Tonson's custom to puff up all his band of authors as great geniuses, or "eminent hands." Such was his expression.

Between Dryden and Jacob Tonson many little squabbles arose, the poet betraying, in the correspondence collected by Malone, the bitterness of a needy man; the publisher, the spirit of a tradesman softened, it is true, by good nature, but still commercial in its essence. Tonson complains of only having received of the translations from Ovid, 1446 lines for fifty guineas, whereas he expected 1518 lines for forty guineas, adding, that he had made a better bargain for Juvenal, which was a more difficult work to translate than Ovid. These stipulations were mitigated by presents of sherry and of melons; but the course between publisher and author, like that of true love, is not always destined to "run smooth." The current coin was at that time as debased as the court morality; and poor Dryden could ill afford to lose any portion of his hard-wrought gains by a chance of alloy, for which deduction would be made. On one occasion he wrote: — "I expect forty pounds in good silver, not such as I had formerly; I am not obliged to take gold, neither will I, nor stay for it above four-and-twenty hours after it is due." But this was nothing: often the well-born poet was ruffled by the insolence of the son of the barber-surgeon.

Alas! circumstances bring even the highest low. Dryden, necessitous and broken spirited, was sometimes obliged to forestall the payments due to him. On one occasion Tonson refused that accommodation, so fatal to the dignity of an author, but, unhappily, so frequently required and given even in the present times. Upon Tonson's refusal, Dryden sent the publisher a very satirical triplet, with this message:— "Tell the dog, he who wrote these lines can write more." The verses enforced a compliance; but, in spite of Dryden's repentant precautions, they got abroad, and were published in "Faction Displayed," a poem by Shipper, in which Dryden's lines were inserted. They depict the swelling pride of Tonson under the name of "Bibliopolo," and have already been referred to.

In Dr. King's "Anecdotes," it is mentioned that Lord Bolingbroke, visiting Dryden one day in Gerard Street, heard another person coming in. Dryden turned to Bolingbroke and intreated him to remain, since the intruder, he knew, was Tonson. "I have not completed the sheet which I promised him," added the poor slave (that worst of slaves—a literary slave); "and if you leave me unprotected, I shall suffer all the rudeness to which resentment can prompt his tongue."

Notwithstanding these traits, indicating a relentless and merciless spirit, Tonson had the reputation of being strictly honest; and his society was courted by men of high attainments. He died a rich bachelor, and adorned his villa at Barn Elms with portraits of the

Kit-Cat Club, painted by Kneller. The room in which the club sat in Shire Lane was too low for whole-length portraits, and hence was introduced the "Kit-Cat," as it came to be called; larger than a three-quarter, and long enough to admit of a hand being introduced. Tonson had not only the luxury of seeing his immortal friends gazing at him from the mute canvas every day as he entered his villa, but of giving to the world a splendid volume of their portraits, beginning with that of Kneller, and ending with his own, in a gown and cap — the approved undress costume of the literary men of that day — and holding the "Paradise Lost" in his hand. This celebrated work is dedicated to the Duke of Somerset, who set the example of giving his portrait to Mr. Tonson. The bookseller's estate near Ledbury, in Herefordshire, was also one of the results of *little Jacob's* successful speculations.

At length, the close of a busy and prosperous career arrived: when the publisher was about to heave his last sigh, one regret disturbed that awful moment. What might it be? Was it that he had overcharged an account, or beaten down a starving author? That he had hurried on Dryden's malady by his vituperations, or brought on himself a satire from the incomparable pen of the heart-wrung poet, by his relentless bargains? No: such gentle causes for remorse disturbed not the expiring Tonson. "I wish," he said, "I could begin the world over again." He was asked, "Why that expression of fruitless regret?" "Be-

cause," he replied, "I should have died worth a hundred thousand pounds, whereas I now die worth only eighty thousand pounds!" Such was the report at the time; but worthy and candid biographers doubt the fact. On the whole, there might be worse men in their vocation than Jacob Tonson. Notwithstanding his taste for *puff*—that familiar demon of the publisher—notwithstanding his propensity to dignify his "volunteers and adventurers in poetry," into geniuses; for, as Pope observed, "Jacob creates poets as kings do knights, not for their honour, but for their money;"—in spite of these and some other littlenesses, Tonson is allowed to have been a good judge "both of persons and of authors;" to have been very honest and candid, and free from the vulgar ambition of Lintot.

His nephew, Jacob Tonson, pre-deceased him; and his great nephew, Jacob the third, succeeded to his business. And now uprose the character of the family. Mr. Tonson, the publisher of Johnson, was liberal, just, and of amiable manners. A beautiful character has been drawn of this excellent man by Steevens, in the Preface to his edition of Shakspeare. In this, his zeal for the improvement of English literature is eulogised, and his liberality to men of learning. He is said "to have enlarged his mind beyond solicitude about petty losses, and refined from the desire of unreasonable profit." What a gem in the turbid world of letters! "Nor did he," writes the same panegyrist, "consider the author as an under-agent to the bookseller." Blessings be on his memory!

It will be here seen that the publishers of the eighteenth century generally constituted themselves the critics of the manuscripts which were placed in their hands for consideration; and that the modern innovation of the critical reader—an office essential now from the great mass of publications—was then unknown, or only partially adopted; but it seems doubtful whether that state of affairs was beneficial to letters. Some of our most approved standard works went begging from publisher to publisher, and were only accepted by a sort of accident at last. Prideaux's "Connexion between the Old and New Testament" was, for instance, banded from hand to hand, between five or six booksellers, for two years. By one publisher the author was gravely told "that the subject was dry: it should be enlivened with a *little humour*." At last Echard recommended it to Tonson. "Robinson Crusoe," it is well known, ran through the whole trade; finally, a bookseller, more knowing than his brethren, published it, and realised a thousand pounds from it. "Tristram Shandy" was offered by Sterne to a bookseller for fifty pounds, and was rejected; Dodsley eventually published it. The public, too, were ofttimes as stupid as the publishers. For instance, the "Rosciad" was perfectly unsuccessful at first; only ten copies were sold in five days: at length Garrick, finding his own praises in it, patronised it, and then Churchill reaped a harvest from its sale. Gray's "Ode on Eton College," according to Warton, excited very little attention. What may surprise some people

still more is, that Blair's "Sermons" were refused by Strahan the publisher. To turn to another class of works: Burns' "Justice" was sold by its author for a small sum, for he was weary, as he declared, of importuning booksellers to buy it; it now realises an annual income. Buchan's "Domestic Medicine" was purchased for five pounds.

In light literature the author was also sacrificed to his own penury and eagerness, and to the blindness or cupidity of the publisher. Miss Burney's "Evelina," all the world can remember, sold for five pounds; "The Wanderer," by Savage, produced only ten; "The Vicar of Wakefield" was purchased, it is true, for the sum of sixty guineas, but it gained not that success until "The Traveller" had made its author's name famous.

The narrow escape which Fielding had of selling his "Tom Jones" for an "old song" must not be omitted. He had disposed of the copyright of that work for twenty-five pounds, when in great distress. Thomson, however, happening to see the manuscript, advised his friend to get rid of his bargain, promising to introduce the novelist to Andrew Millar, the eminent publisher. Accordingly, Millar and Fielding met at a tavern. "Mr. Fielding," said the publisher, "I always determine on affairs of this sort at once." He paused—the heart of the author sank—Mr. Millar resumed: "I cannot offer more than two hundred pounds for your work." "Two hundred pounds!" cried the delighted

Fielding; and rushing from his chair he shook the publisher by the hand, then turning to the bell, summoned the waiter, and ordered two more bottles of wine. Alas, poor Fielding! there was no saving that ill-starred, ill-conditioned, but most interesting man, from ruin.

The independence of Fielding was of short duration; eventually he borrowed upon his works five hundred pounds from Millar, a sum which that generous man cancelled in his will.

One sickens over these details, which bring to the mind the heartache of many a true genius, the disappointment, the degradation, the despair. We dare not dilate on modern days, one trait of which will, perhaps, suffice. "The Pleasures of Hope" were refused by every publisher in London, and were only published, at last, on condition that the author should be content with the sum of twenty pounds.

It is not to be marvelled at that some disappointed, and, *perhaps*, injured authors, took up the subject of supposed or real wrongs. I say, supposed, for it is a vulgar error to assume that authors are always the injured parties: they are generally exacting, often faithless to their engagements, and move in a body militant against their publishers. Be that as it may, in 1738, a pamphlet appeared, entitled, "A Letter to the Booksellers on the Method of forming a True Judgment of the Manuscripts of Authors." One cannot help thinking that such a hint, if judiciously given,

might not be without its use even in the present enlightened days."

Contrasted with the catalogue of needy and disappointed authors, there was a constellation, during the last century, of opulent and titled aspirants to fame. Horace Walpole himself graced the profession of a printer, and the establishment of the Strawberry Hill press shows, at least, how fashionable letters had become. "My abbey," he wrote, "is a perfect college or academy. I keep a painter in the house, and a printer." His printing-office was Mrs. Damer's modelling-room; and the crafty Horace rendered small editions of his works valuable as well by their rarity as by their originating from the Strawberry Hill press. He printed of his "Anecdotes of Painting" three hundred copies; the public called for another edition, he then issued six hundred, but the demand was diminished by the ready supply, and the volumes remained on the shelves of their parent author and printer. "I am humbled as an author," said Walpole, "I am vain as a printer."

But the most fastidious and extravagant of authors was the accomplished, the moral Lord Lyttleton. How striking the contrast between this peer and the plebeian authors of his time! Whilst they, trembling with cold, hungry, and despairing, hurried off their manuscripts to the printer's hands, and scattered their productions, as it were, to the winds, careless of fame, solicitous only to live, Lyttleton printed and reprinted his "Life of Henry II.," correcting and recorrecting with an anxiety which could not defend him from the

blast of Dr. Johnson's criticism. The whole work was printed twice before it was deemed fit for publication, a part of it three times, and the corrections cost the noble author a thousand pounds.

Johnson's "Dictionary," which was calculated to take three years in its compilation and printing, required eight for its completion, the sum given for it being 1575*l.*, scarcely 200*l.* a year. Out of this Johnson had to pay six assistants, to whom he intrusted the mechanical parts; and of these, great as was his prejudice against their country, five were Scotchmen. Poor Johnson had spent the whole sum received for the copyright, and one hundred pounds more, before this great national work was concluded. When the last sheet was brought in to Mr. Millar, the publisher, he exclaimed, "Thank God, I have done with him!" "I am glad," observed the surly Johnson, when told of this, "that he has thanked God for anything." The receipts for his payment were exhibited at the coffee-house sale in which the "Dictionary" was produced to the trade.

Much more might be said, nay, a volume might be written, upon the singularly desultory and wretched lives of writers in the eighteenth century, and upon their connexion with publishers. Among those who had the largest army of hack-writers in his pay was Edward Cave, the original reporter and publisher of speeches in parliament, and the founder of "The Gentleman's Magazine." Cave was a native of Warwickshire, his family residing at Cave-in-the-Hole. He

began life as clerk to a collector of excise, and afterwards became a journeyman printer, fulfilling various offices until, in time, he attained sufficient means to set up a printing-office at St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell, a print of which still figures on the cover of the magazine. In 1728, Cave was ordered into the custody of the serjeant-at-arms for reporting the debates to a country newspaper, but he contrived to obtain his liberty, and shortly afterwards formed a plan of publishing a regular series of debates, which he perfected, assisted by William Guthrie, of geographical memory, one of his *corps de réserve.* The method of reporting, be it observed in passing, was very laborious. Cave used to station himself, with a friend or two, in different parts of the gallery, and there privately take down notes of the speeches. When the House rose, these gentlemen all assembled in some neighbouring coffee-house, and there connected the disjointed scraps which they had furtively collected.

"The Gentleman's Magazine" was commenced in 1735, under the title of a "Magazine Extraordinary," and prizes were offered for the best poem, the first reward being a medal worth ten pounds, having the head of Lady Elizabeth Hastings on the one side, and that of James Oglethorpe on the other, with the inscription, "England may challenge the world." It is curious to think how both Lady Elizabeth Hastings and Mr. Oglethorpe, so worthy of renown as they must have been in their day, are now clean out of remembrance. Johnson became an early contributor to "The

Gentleman's Magazine," and imbibed a sincere regard for its publisher. Before he came to London, Johnson had entertained an ardent admiration for the magazine. "He told me," said Boswell, "that when he first saw St. John's Gate, the place where that deservedly-esteemed magazine was originally printed, he beheld it *with deep reverence.*" At St. John's Gate were printed, eventually, the "Vanity of Human Wishes," and "Irene." For the former, published by Dodsley, and printed only by Cave, Johnson received merely fifteen guineas. At St. John's Gate was printed, also, "The Rambler," that work of extraordinary wisdom, poured forth from the storehouse of one brain only; for, with the exception of a few contributions from Richardson, Mrs. Chapone, Mrs. Carter, and Mrs. Catherine Talbot, Johnson was the sole author of that periodical. Many of these papers were written rapidly, as the moment pressed, without being read over in proof. Well might Cave, pleased with such an accession to his forces, address "Mr. Johnson as the Great Rambler, being the only man who could furnish two such papers in a week, besides his other great business." Johnson, after the death of his friend, rewarded this confidence and admiration by the simple, but touching expression, "Poor, dear Cave!" When a man of Johnson's temperament betrays the latent fund of sentiment and feeling at the bottom of that rugged surface, the effect is very striking.

Like Lintot, in regard to his "Miscellany," Cave lived for his "Magazine." It was the object of his

existence; his very power of perception seemed to be absorbed in what related to the "next number." When a stranger was introduced to the luminary of St. John's Gate, he was received by Sylvanus Urban, a *sobriquet* now become immortal, sitting, for Cave rarely condescended to rise to company. An ominous silence of some moments usually succeeded; it was broken by the voice of Urban, who, putting a leaf of the forthcoming number into his visitor's hand, asked his opinion of it; such was his custom. Upon becoming acquainted with Johnson, he was anxious to dazzle the new auxiliary with the lustre of his fellow-labourers in the magazine. By Cave the powers and acquirements of Johnson were not, they could not be, comprehended. Moses Browne, who was originally a pen-cutter, and who wrote the "Piscatory Eclogues" in the "Gentleman's Magazine," having obtained thereby Cave's first prize (those same eclogues delighting many an elderly gentleman of yore), was, in Urban's eyes, one of the first of men. Browne was also well known for his series of devout contemplations, called "Sunday Thoughts," sneered at by Johnson, who said he thought he should himself write "Monday Thoughts." Then there was a reputable list of useful and learned contributors. The Rev. William Rider, who wrote the papers styled "Philaigyrus;" Mr. Adam Calamy, who distinguished his essays by the superscription "A *consistent* Protestant;" the antiquary Pegge; and last, not least, the justly celebrated Akenside, and the unhappy Boyse, the author of a poem called the

"Deity." Poor Boyse! his history was a sad exemplification of the improvident man of letters. His life, his death, were consistent. He was a translator, and often by the time that a sheet of his work was done, he had pawned the original. Johnson once redeemed his clothes for him, collecting the sum needful by shillings. Boyse was at that time sitting up in bed, with his arms through holes in the blankets, writing verses to procure the means of existence. According to one account, he was found dead in his bed, in the act of writing, a pen in his hand, his arms through the accustomed holes; but Johnson alleged that he was run over by a coach in a state of intoxication—a dismal choice of an exit on either hand! To this goodly crew Johnson was introduced by Cave, at an alehouse near Clerkenwell, where, wrapped up in a horseman's coat, and wearing a bushy, uncombed wig, the "Great Rambler" beheld his lettered associates, Mr. Moses Browne, conspicuous at the head of them, enveloped in a cloud of tobacco-smoke. The interview with his supposed equals must have been highly gratifying to Johnson's self-complacency. On the whole, however, Johnson prized the shrewd, though rough, "Mr. Urban." Not all his want of refinement could conceal Cave's real sagacity, nor his love of an honest profit obliterate his native liberality of feeling. Even his absurdities—his buying an old coach, and a pair of still more ancient horses, and, that he might escape the imputation of pride, his displaying a representation of St. John's Gate, by way of arms, on the panel of his carriage,—not even

his admiration for "Sunday Thoughts," could banish from Johnson's heart the conviction of Cave's worth when living, nor, after death, dull the regrets which one feels for the loss of a true, although a provoking friend. "One of the last acts of reason he exerted," said Johnson, when penning Cave's eulogy, "was *fondly to press the hand that is now writing this little narrative.*"

CHAP XI.

CHARTLEY CASTLE AND THE FERRERS FAMILY.

LAURENCE, EARL FERRERS; WHITEFIELD; AND LADY HUNTINGDON.

CHARTLEY, like the early renown of the Ferrers family, is now no more. Adjoining the parish of Stone, in Staffordshire, it stood formerly in an extensive park, and possessed all the attributes of a strong baronial abode in the middle ages. Built round a court, and embattled at the top, it was enriched along the sides with curious specimens of carved wood. The arms of the Devereux's and Ferrer's were conspicuous there, and over the gateway was a head in profile, surmounted with a crown. There was a moat, likewise, of which the remains still show the original dimensions of the pile; but this pile itself was consumed by fire in 1781. Chartley had, however, its days of dignity; for the godly Earl of Chester held his court here so early as the thirteenth century, and Mary, Queen of Scots, passed a portion of her captivity under the dark shadow of its roof.

And now let your chronicler connect the Ferrers' family with this ill-starred structure, and show upon

what grounds the Chartley Ferrers's merit a more peculiar notice than others of their name and house.

The surname of this noble race is Shirley. Their relation to Chartley originated not in any kindred with that Earl Ferrers who, after the death of the founder, possessed the castle; nor was it till the time of Charles II. that Chartley came into their possession.

Of Saxon descent (Sewallis of Eatington was the head of their line), their chief seat lay in Warwickshire; whence, in process of time, they stretched themselves out in various directions. They eminently distinguished themselves in the reign of Edward III. In the reign of James I., Sir Henry Shirley aspired to the hand of the daughter of Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, and obtained it. The great civil war bowed them down for a season; but, under Charles II., they revived, and became, at length, ennobled, with the title of Lord Ferrers of Chartley.

Such were the destinies of this race, till in modern times a stain was affixed on its reputation, and a tragedy, dark as ever lover of romance coveted, sullied its bright honour.

But, before I enter upon these details of horror, let me give a slight review of those members of the Shirley family who have shed lustre on their name. To Sir Thomas Shirley, the first baronet of his house, the public owe three distinct MS. histories of the Shirley family, which are preserved in the British Museum. But the three brothers, celebrated as *the* three Shirleys, were the scions of that branch of the

family which settled in Sussex. The little work entitled "Travels of Sir Robert, Sir Thomas, and Sir Anthony Shirley," has more the character of romance than truth. These gentlemen flourished in the sixteenth century, and their adventures were celebrated in an indifferent tragedy, entitled, "The Three English Brothers;" but, as Fuller remarks, "the affidavit of a poet carrieth but a small credit in the court of history."

Chartley came into the possession of the Shirleys from the Devereux family, after the death of the last Earl of Essex of that name. It was not, however, at any time, the principal residence of the family; for they owned, likewise, the estate of Staunton Harold, in Leicestershire, and having improved and ornamented it at a large expenditure of money, they naturally set up their abode there, visiting Chartley but at intervals.

At his beautiful seat in Leicestershire lived Laurence, the fourth Earl Ferrers. No one has disputed either the acquirements or the natural abilities of this unhappy peer; but he seems to have been cursed with violent passions, which he made no effort to subdue, and which were quite unfettered by any of those gentler affections which sometimes supply the place of a sense of duty.

Laurence succeeded his uncle, Henry, third earl Ferrers, under very peculiar circumstances. The latter had been long a lunatic, and being placed, by the authority of a statute of lunacy, in confinement, he died, after a short lucid interval, insane. The Lady

Barbara Shirley, aunt to Earl Laurence, had also died insane. These facts were urged as sufficiently accounting for his savage character; but, perhaps, its growth may be as justly traced back to his making in early life what was then called the grand tour; during which he contracted a habit of drinking, and became more than commonly imbued with the vices which were then too common among the younger portion of our aristocracy.

In 1752, Lord Ferrers married; the unhappy object of his choice was Mary, the sister of Sir William Meredith. Gentle and timid, this lady soon experienced the most brutal treatment from her husband. Violent fits of passion were, perhaps, scarcely so intolerable as the direful suspicion of every low connexion, the endless and bitter jealousies by which those storms of fury were fed, like a turbid stream from a foul source. Nor could any thing be more revolting to a young and refined woman than the earl's ordinary demeanour. Wine, in which he habitually indulged to excess, infuriated him to what appeared madness. His calmer moments were diversified by making mouths in the looking-glass, and spitting upon it; or, grinning, clenching his fists, walking up and down the room, biting his lips, and tearing the pictures. These were the amusements of his sober hours; and even in these *tranquil* moments violent and causeless bursts of passion would shake the fortitude of the stoutest of his companions. Sometimes at table fierce attacks and bitter railings broke up all peace. One day he followed his brother, Mr. Walter Shirley, up stairs, and planting himself

with his back to the fire, in the presence of the ladies, broke out into insulting and violent language, without, apparently, the slightest provocation. To these vehement passions there was not the alleviation of a generous and feeling temper, such as often accompanies a disposition of the kind. Lord Ferrers was wholly devoid of honour; remorse was unknown to him: he lived only for himself, and tyrannised over all around him. His younger brothers and sisters could not obtain from him the fortunes left to them, without lawsuits, and hence he was continually at warfare with these, his nearest connexions. His lady, however, was by far the greatest sufferer, and at length her forbearance was exhausted. She appealed to the law for redress, and obtained a divorce by Act of Parliament; and by the same Act it was ordered, that a receiver of the rents accruing from Lord Ferrers' estates should be appointed, and should apply those rents as the Act directed. That receiver was his victim, Johnson.

Lady Ferrers thus became free; but although she had endured every possible variety of cruelty, her lord felt deeply their separation,—perhaps from shame—perhaps from some lingering admiration of his injured wife—perhaps from the annoyance of that triumph which virtue had obtained over vice. The earl now grew evidently worse; he was often absent from Staunton Harold, and preferred living in lodgings at Muswell Hill, frequently boarding at a small public-house kept by a Mrs. Williams. His temper became so furious, that, in the company of his equals, he could

not restrain it; and when on a visit to Lord West-moreland, he quarrelled with Sir Thomas Stapleton, and purposed advertising that gentleman in all the newspapers as a coward if he did not give him satisfaction. In short, his conduct was so outrageous, that a consultation was held by his friends as to the expediency of taking out a commission of lunacy against him; but they were deterred from that step by considering that his intervals of sanity were long, and that his lordship might avenge himself by suing them for *scandalum magnatum:* and thus he was left to pursue his own unhallowed course. His excesses were the amusement of the low, the horror of his equals. One day he *rescued* his horse from the stables of his friend Mrs. Williams, the publican, striking the poor woman down to the ground first. Next, he might be seen, in the company of the lowest characters, breaking poor Mrs. Williams's glasses, and threatening to strangle her if she opposed him. Sometimes he lamented these fits of lunacy, as he called them, and cautioned others not to be affronted at his behaviour. But, during all this time he conducted his affairs with the greatest exactness and penetration; and those who had to deal with his lordship soon found out that it would require more than ordinary skill to deceive him. It was stated on his trial by the earl's attorney, that he suffered the ill-fated peer to perform several legal acts which were necessary to cut off an entail, and this he would not have permitted had he not been convinced of the earl's sanity. From this singular case some conclusions rela-

tive to the different degrees of madness have been deduced; but it has been admitted, even by those who were disposed to excuse Earl Ferrers, that his was not that species of insanity which may relieve an individual from responsibility, because it prevents him from distinguishing between right and wrong.

The act being passed which compelled the appointment of the receiver to his estates, Lord Ferrers was permitted to select the person in whom that trust should be reposed. He chose Mr. James Johnson, who was his steward, and who had been reared in the service of his lordship's family. This selection was made under an impression that Johnson would be disposed to favour Lord Ferrers, and to betray his trust; but that notion was soon set aside by the integrity of Johnson, who refused to oblige his patron at the expense of his honesty. Upon this, Lord Ferrers formed as deep-laid a scheme as ever entered into the head of the children of evil. His first endeavour was to eject Johnson from a farm which he had been permitted to rent by a verbal promise from the earl. This promise had been given before Johnson was appointed receiver, but it had since been confirmed by the earl's trustees. Johnson could not, therefore, be ejected. He would have done wisely to yield the point, but the poor victim foresaw not his doom. He knew, indeed, that the greatest hatred of him had taken possession of the earl's heart, who brought all manner of charges against him; but the brink of the precipice on which poor Johnson stood was now besprinkled with flowers.

The earl changed his behaviour towards him. He began to dissemble; he smiled on the victim whom he intended to destroy; he became affable and good-humoured. It is wonderful that Johnson, knowing his patron from childhood, should have been deceived, but so it was. One day—it was on Sunday, the 13th of January, 1760—Lord Ferrers made an appointment with his steward to come to him on the Friday following. A calm interval of four or five days intervened; it was passed by Lord Ferrers in maturing his scheme. Beneath the roof of Staunton Harold lived a certain Mrs. Clifford, whose connection with Lord Ferrers was notorious, and who had borne him four children. It is remarkable, that he wished either to save this woman from any participation in his offence, or that he dreaded her interference. He, therefore, desired her to absent herself at a certain hour on the day of his appointment with Johnson, and to take her children with her; and accordingly they walked over to her father's house, two miles distant from Staunton Harold. The two men servants in his lordship's service were also sent out; so that three women servants alone remained in the house at Staunton Harold. The hour specified was noted down in Lord Ferrers' memory: it was three o'clock, and punctually at that hour the victim arrived.

The unfortunate man was received at the door by Lord Ferrers, and was directed to wait in the still-room. After a time, his lordship ordered Johnson into the parlour, and they entered it together, upon

which the door was closed and locked. What then happened was afterwards made known by Lord Ferrers' confession. One of the maid servants, it is true, hearing some high words, went to the door of the parlour to listen. She heard his lordship say, "Down on your knees, Johnson! your time is come! You must die!" Then there was the report of a pistol, and the affrighted woman fled to a different part of the house. Lord Ferrers, in his confession, declared, that he said to his steward, "Johnson, you have been a villain; if you don't sign a paper, confessing all your villany, I will shoot you!" Johnson refused to sign. Then Lord Ferrers fired. The pistol was a good one, for it had already been tried, and had carried its ball through a board. The aim was certain, and the ball penetrated into the steward's body. He did not, however, drop; he rose, and was able to walk.

As Lord Ferrers looked upon his victim, a momentary pang of compassion softened his terrible heart: he quitted the room, and went to seek assistance; and having found one of the maid-servants, he ordered her to return with him, and to assist Johnson upstairs to bed. When she had reached the parlour, the woman heard Lord Ferrers ask the murdered man how he was? "My lord," replied the steward, "I am a dying man—send for my children!"

That request was complied with: his daughter came. She was conducted by Lord Ferrers himself to the room where her father lay, and told by his lordship that he had shot him, and had intended to do so. Then,

as he stood in the presence of the fainting man, his rage returned; he attempted to pull off the bed-clothes, but was prevented by the daughter, who, perhaps, anticipated a further revenge, a fresh act of barbarity; and too just were her fears.

A surgeon named Kirkland was sent for by Lord Ferrers, from Ashby-de-la-Zouche. This person did not, however, proceed immediately to the Hall, but called at the Lount, Johnson's house, where he found Lord Ferrers lurking about. He went to him: the earl desired he would come on, and attend to Johnson, as he had shot him. While they walked to the Hall, he told the surgeon that if any body attempted to seize him he would shoot him; and he was assured that Mr. Kirkland would not suffer his lordship to be seized, since Johnson was not dead. At this time the peer, far more to be commiserated than the steward who lay in agonies, was partially intoxicated; and, under that influence, he confessed his premeditated guilt, and declared that if Johnson died, he would voluntarily surrender himself to the House of Lords. The surgeon, alarmed at his threatened violence, or softened by his fears, adopted a soothing plan, which prevented further violence, and effectually kept the fated murderer within the reach of justice.

Mr. Kirkland found Johnson in extreme anguish. There seemed no possibility of extracting the ball, which had entered the abdomen; but the earl was assured, that even were a serious injury done to that vital part, there was a chance of recovery. Lord

Ferrers then expressed his opinion that Johnson was more "frightened than hurt." "I intended," he said, "to have shot him dead, but finding that he did not fall at the first shot, I was going to fire a second, only the pain he complained of made me forbear. Then nature prevailed over the resolution I had formed. I desire you will take care of him, for it would be cruel not to give him ease now *I have spared his life!*" A strange mode of expression. Yet Lord Ferrers repeatedly declared that he did not repent of his act—"for Johnson is a villain, and deserves death."

Mr. Johnson appeared to revive, and the earl and the surgeon went down to supper together. The repast was presided over by Mrs. Clifford. Wine was brought, and drunk freely; but the conversation, in spite of every effort on the part of Lord Ferrers to appear unconcerned, perpetually reverted to Johnson. He told the surgeon, that a bill due to him should be discharged in part, if he would set the affair in such a light that he should not be seized. Mr. Kirkland still maintained his prudent demeanour, and replied, "that he did not want money, and that his lordship could settle his account whenever it suited him." Late at night the surgeon, accompanied by Lord Ferrers, went again to see Johnson. By this time the nobleman was inflamed with wine, and the presence of the man whom he hated produced the utmost exasperation. A fearful scene ensued. At first, Lord Ferrers spoke temperately, merely insisting that the steward should own that he had "been a villain to him." The wounded

man only answered by requesting that his lordship would let him alone at that time. Lord Ferrers, upon this, in fury, attempted to pull off the bed-clothes, and it was feared he would have struck Johnson, had not the poor man, prompted by the surgeon, defenceless and wounded, at last faltered out "that he owned he was a villain." Lord Ferrers then left the room, and the murdered and the murderer met no more on this side of the grave.

The sorrowing daughter stood trembling all this time by the bedside of her father. What a sight! When Lord Ferrers had retired to bed, measures were taken to remove his victim from Staunton Harold. The sufferer entreated "that, for God's sake, they would take him away." As they conferred, the voice of the murderer calling to his pointer alarmed them; but Lord Ferrers closed his bedroom door, and all was silent. Then, in the dead of night, Johnson was carried to his home—to die. He was conveyed in an easy chair, borne by stout country fellows, on poles. This removal was no doubt fatal to Johnson; but there was no alternative, for his nerves were weak, and it was believed, that had he remained at Staunton Harold he would have died of fear: even in his own house he begged to change his room, lest Lord Ferrers might find out where he was, and shoot at him through the window. He was gratified; but the deed was done—Johnson was then sinking, his extremities were cold, and at nine the next morning he expired.

It remained to apprehend the murderer. On the

following day a multitude thronged round the parties in authority, and proceeded to the Hall. They soon perceived Lord Ferrers going to the stable, his dress in great disorder. He stopped short, and asked what they wanted. The mission was disclosed, and the earl instantly fled into the house. Two hours afterwards he appeared at a garret window. He called to a man named Springthorpe, who headed the party, and asked how Johnson was? He was told that the steward was dead. At first, he pretended not to believe it: afterwards, he said he should surrender; yet he again disappeared, but was taken two hours afterwards by a man named Curtis, a collier. Lord Ferrers then made a formidable appearance. He had taken advantage of the interval to arm himself with a blunderbuss, two or three pistols, and a dagger; but Curtis, far from being intimidated, made up to the earl, and so overpowered him by an air of strong determination, that he suffered himself to be seized without the slightest resistance. The moment afterwards he exclaimed, "that he had killed a villain, and that he gloried in it."

Lord Ferrers was conveyed first to Ashby-de-la Zouche, where he awaited the verdict of the coroner's jury. He was then committed to Leicester gaol, and thence taken in his own landau and four, under a strong guard, to the Tower.

On the 16th of April he was brought to his trial, which lasted two days. He conducted his defence himself, and committed a fatal error in so doing; for his sole chance of escape from the judgment of the law

rested on the popular belief of his insanity. His acuteness, his presence of mind, his clear memory, his pertinent questions, completely refuted this notion. His unhappy brothers did their best to save him from an ignominious death upon this presumption. Horace Walpole, who was present at the trial, feelingly remarks,—"It was affecting to see his family come forward to prove insanity in blood, in order to save him." To the earl's credit, he entered into this attempt with reluctance, and remarked, with a delicacy and sensibility for which few could have given him credit, upon the situation to which he was reduced, "in being obliged to prove himself a lunatic that he might not be deemed a murderer." When he found that the plea could not save him, he confessed that he had availed himself of it only to gratify his friends, and that he believed it had been prejudicial to his cause. The lord high steward, in passing sentence, remarked, "that the prisoner had appeared almost ashamed to take refuge under a pretended insanity; but that he had displayed, in all his cross-examinations of the witnesses, the exactness of a memory more than ordinarily sound."

During the progress of the trial, the sympathies of the lords had been awakened to the situation of the noble prisoner. His calmness, his clearness and ability, were extorting admiration, until, as the evidence proceeded, his determined, fierce revenge was manifested; and when it was shown that he had endeavoured to pull the bed-clothes off his agonised victim, with a view to tearing the bandages from his wound, the peers, with

one accord, rose up, and turned their backs upon the wretched prisoner — so relates Horace Walpole — and, when the question was put, not a dissentient voice was heard in that solemn assembly; the words, "Guilty, upon my honour," resounded from mouth to mouth, reverberating through the crowded house, and listened to in breathless silence.

On the following day Lord Ferrers received judgment. A brief, manly address from the criminal, closed this remarkable scene. He regretted that he had troubled their lordships with a defence to which he was always averse — that of insanity. He thanked their lordships for their "fair and candid trial;" and requested a respite, which was afterwards granted.

During that solemn interval, Lord Ferrers made a will, in which he left 1300*l.* to Mr. Johnson's family, 60*l.* a-year to Mrs. Clifford, and 1000*l.* to each of his natural children. This will being made after his conviction, was not valid; but, by the good feeling of his successors, it was carried into effect.

Whilst the earl was thus evincing in some measure his penitence, the famous Whitefield visited him, and endeavoured to convert him. He found him courteous, but inflexibly deaf to religious subjects, — a state of mind which Whitefield, or, as Horace Walpole calls him, "that impertinent fellow," described in his sermons as a "heart of stone."

But the last sad scene now approached. Tyburn was then in all its sombre glory; and thither, to undergo the punishment of hanging, Lord Ferrers was to be

conveyed. A scaffold was erected there, and was covered with black cloth.

The attire in which Lord Ferrers dressed himself for this, the last act of his wretched life, seems to imply great singularity, if it be not characteristic of absolute insanity. Instead of assuming a decorous mourning, he appeared in a suit of a light colour, embroidered gaily with silver. This was said to have been his wedding dress. "You may think it strange, sir," said the peer to the sheriff, who attended him, "to see me in this dress, but I have a *particular reason for it.*" The procession then set out amid the gaze of thousands, to whom that day was a holiday. Lord Ferrers, by his own request, went to his doom in his landau and four, escorted by horse-guards. A mourning coach and six, containing a party of his friends, followed the landau; and this was again succeeded by a hearse and six, provided for the reception of his body.

During his imprisonment, Lord Ferrers wrote to the king, praying that he might suffer where his ancestor the Earl of Essex had suffered. He reminded his majesty that he quartered part of the royal arms with his own; but this appeal was fruitless; and it was appointed that the earl should die where common felons met their doom.

This trait of family pride in one so degraded may appear singular to those who look not into the human heart, and do not know how nearly meanness and loftiness, shame and impenitence, are found united there. But how can we explain Lord Ferrers' religious senti-

ments, or reconcile them with his actions? He declared as he went along, amid a mass of human beings whose attention was fixed on him only, "that he had always adored one God; although he never could believe what some sectaries teach, that faith alone will save mankind, and that if a man, just before his death, say, '*I believe!*' that alone would ensure his salvation." He blamed Lord Bolingbroke for publishing his opinions, and disturbing the order of society. The melancholy procession was followed all this while by a coach containing the unhappy partner of Lord Ferrers' guilt, Mrs. Clifford. When they drew near the scaffold, Lord Ferrers told the sheriff that he wished to take leave of that person, for "whom he had a very sincere regard." But upon the sheriff objecting, he replied, "Sir, if you think I am wrong, I submit." He then delivered to the sheriff a purse, a ring, and a pocket-book, in which there was a bank-note, and begged him to give them "to that individual."

His death was marked by a composure and decorum, and an apparent penitence, which almost cause a regret that a still longer respite had not been afforded to one who, now for the first time, had met with any opposition to his will, or known the salutary chastisement of adversity. The attendants, awe-struck yet gratified, heard from the lips of the felon the ejaculation, "O God, forgive me all my errors—pardon all my sins!"

The following verses were found in Lord Ferrers' apartment in the Tower. They were attributed to him, but were probably made for him:—

"In doubt I lived, in doubt I die,
Yet stand prepared the vast abyss to try;
And *undismayed* expect eternity."

Thus died one, on whose doom the judgment of the present generation, more lenient than the past, passes this criticism—that the insanity of the culprit was undoubted. How far it might be alleged in excuse of a crime so coolly premeditated, so systematically accomplished, is problematical. Doubtless, in our own times, a life-long imprisonment would have been substituted for the punishment of death; when the mind which retained so many of its healthiest powers might have been brought to a sense of duty, the heart reclaimed, the burden of guilt alleviated. But George II.'s determination to make an example of one in so exalted a station was inexorable; and we cannot but respect the firmness which was based upon a principle so just. Earl Ferrers was succeeded by his brother Washington, who took his seat in the House of Lords—it being established, that an entailed dignity is not forfeited by attainder of felony.

It is a relief to turn to another member of the Shirley family, who, whatever might have been her errors of judgment, was devout, conscientious, bountiful. Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, was the aunt of Earl Laurence, being the daughter and one of the coheiresses of Washington, second Earl Ferrers. She was married when in her twenty-second year to Theophilus, Earl of Huntingdon, whose death at an early age is supposed to have first disposed her mind to reli-

gious impressions. Four sons and three daughters were the issue of this marriage; and the sorrows attending upon the death of some of these children, and the anxieties imparted by the misconduct of others, cooperate with the endeavours of that powerful mind which, in the celebrated Whitefield, was destined to control Lady Huntingdon's reason, and prompt her actions.

In the spring-time of her life Lady Huntingdon was of a gay disposition and fascinating manners. The loss of her children—for one daughter alone survived her, and the death of her husband before the charms of her prosperous life had been touched by time, destroyed for ever the elasticity of her spirits. She had never been of a dissipated turn, but was always pious and benevolent, and, before she became a proselyte of Whitefield, was a member of the Church of England. No second nuptials ever engaged her affections, which were devoted to the dead; and it was thought typical of her coldness to all earthly passions that the widowed countess placed on the tomb of her lost husband a marble bust. "Cold was she," writes one who has drawn her character, "as the insensible marble, whose gentle smile, amid the symbols of death, seemed eloquent with immortality."

It was during this void of the heart that Lady Huntingdon first heard Whitefield preach. That most remarkable man was at this time in the prime of life and the zenith of his popularity. His person was graceful, his stature above the middle height, his com-

plexion very fair, and his countenance manly. His eyes were of a dark blue; and although disfigured by a squint, lively and expressive. In after life he became corpulent, and a notion of self-indulgence was imparted by that defect, but there was no ground for it. His habits were singularly nice and cleanly, upon the principle that every thing about a minister should be "*spotless.*" He was known to say that he could *not die easy* if his gloves were out of place. He had the gentlemanly love of order, which required his table to be elegantly spread even if only a loaf, or his favourite dish, a *cow heel*, were to be set upon it.

Such were his external graces; his inward gifts were, perhaps, as remarkable as those of any enthusiast of past times. In society he had a ready wit, recalling somewhat his early occupation at the bar of an inn; and in the pulpit this was thought no unbecoming attribute, even when the most serious themes were in question. His maxim was "to preach as Apelles painted — for eternity;" yet his sermons scarcely excite the passing curiosity of the most enthusiastic at the present day. Never, however, did human preacher exercise so powerful an influence over the passions of others. He thought it his duty, indeed, "to smite with the hand, stamp with the foot, and lift up the voice like a trumpet." He was sometimes the judge putting on his condemning cap, and exclaiming, "Sinner, I must do it! I must proclaim judgment;" sometimes the humorous retailer of a vast store of anecdotes, yet always solemn, always in earnest; every accent of his

voice produced an incredible effect; and the bolder flight of fancy carried his hearers away from the powerful acting of the man, whose art it was to seem natural. His manners fascinated all ranks; he charmed the learned as well as the unlearned; the peer and the peasant went away alike edified and enraptured. The truth is, that, in an age of apathy, he arose a seeming prophet. He was a man of infinite address and of strong sense; and, to use an expression of one of his admirers, he "commonplaced the truths of the Reformation;" adapting them, in his peculiar colloquial manner, to every comprehension. His votaries believed him, however, to be half divine; and thought that, like the apocalyptic angel, he was so near the throne of grace that he came down "clothed with its rainbow."

The celebrated Howel Harris introduced him to Lady Huntingdon, who sent for Whitefield to her house in Chelsea. He preached to her twice in her drawing-room, in a manner which determined her to send for some of the nobility to hear him. Lord Chesterfield was among the complimentary listeners who wished to please the charming countess, and who were amused, perhaps to some good effect, by the preacher.

"Sir," said the great master of politeness to Whitefield, "I shall not tell you what I shall tell others, how I approve of you."

Lord Bolingbroke also came, "sat like an archbishop," and observed that Mr. Whitefield had done

great justice to the divine attributes. Then turning to the countess, he said, —

"You may command my pen when you will; it shall be drawn in your service."

Privy councillors and nobles went to dine with him, and Whitefield exclaimed, —

"Thus the world turns round!"

At this time above a thousand communicants thronged every Sabbath to St. Bartholomew's, where he preached. He lectured at Lady Huntingdon's sometimes to sixty persons of rank, Bolingbroke being generally among the listeners; and in him Whitefield soon felt the deepest interest, and expressed the most lively hopes of his conversion; but although several of the nobility were won over by his persuasions, that lofty intellect remained unsubdued. In process of time, Whitefield formed a plan of identifying Lady Huntingdon with his religious societies. He saw, he said, "a Dorcas at Ashby Place," and felt that she ought to be a "Phœbe." He felt that he wanted a "leader," and selected this generous, high-born woman for that saintly position. How he disclosed to her his wishes, what were her first emotions, to what extent vanity aided the work, as well as faith, we have no records. He wrote to her thus: —

"A '*leader*' is wanting. This honour hath been put upon your ladyship by the great Head of the Church; an honour conferred on few, but an earnest of one to be put on your ladyship before men and angels when time shall be no more."

Lady Huntingdon was won over by this pre-

sumptuous assurance; from henceforth the energies of her mind were devoted to plans for the propagation of the Calvinistic doctrines; upwards of 100,000*l*., in addition to a large sum left in her will, were expended by her in the foundation of chapels, and in aiding the missionaries appointed by Whitefield. She reduced her style of living; she sold her jewels. In 1768 she founded her college near Talgarth in South Wales, for the education of serious and godly young men, and such as she believed had a "divine call." Notwithstanding this very decided line of conduct, Lady Huntingdon had still not renounced the doctrines of Episcopacy, although she sanctioned an independent form of worship. She weighed not, possibly, the consequences of her actions, for she was now completely the creature of Whitefield's will; no enthusiast of Port Royal ever bowed so completely beneath the intellectual power and firm self-reliance of her superiors. Lady Huntingdon describes herself "as a ship before the wind, carried on by an impulse she could not resist or describe."

Doubtless fashion, that powerful machine for keeping alive the heat of the devotee's imagination, had no small influence in these matters. Even at court Whitefield's "elect ladies," as they were called, were the objects of notice. It became the elect, they thought, to dress with peculiar simplicity. Lady Chesterfield, one of the leaders of fashion, went to the drawing-room in a brown lutestring, embroidered with silver flowers. George II., diverted at his own powers of wit

and observation, absolutely laughed aloud as he said to Lady Chesterfield —

"I know who chose that gown for you — Mr. Whitefield. I hear you have been attending him a year and a half." Lady Chesterfield confessed she had, and acknowledged her admiration of the preacher, whilst even the secretary of state stepped forward to assure his majesty that no hurt was designed to the state by the methodists.

Perhaps the secretary might have gone still further. The Christian world was then, as Whitefield expressed it, "in a deep sleep: nothing but a loud voice could awaken it." "I love those," thus was he wont to say, "who thunder out the word." Another proselyte, one of Queen Caroline's ladies of the bedchamber, declared herself "ready to show out," if called upon by Whitefield. But the palace was "ringing about her," and Mrs. Greenfield was advised by the prudent minister to be content without becoming "a glorious martyr," and to be satisfied with hearing him at Lady Huntingdon's select and pious assemblies.

In his lectures to these ladies Whitefield is admitted to have mingled more compliment and consolation than was consistent with their condition or his own sincerity. On one occasion, he made, however, a fatal mistake. The famous Countess of Suffolk was brought by Lady Guildford to Lady Huntingdon's evening meetings. Whitefield was ignorant of her presence, and drew his bow, and let fly his shafts at a venture. Lady Suffolk felt the wounds of conscience or of pride, and believed

that the darts were aimed at her. She contrived to sit through the service in silence; but when the preacher had retired she broke out into violent harangues against Lady Huntingdon, and declared that she knew the sermon was intended to insult her. She was, in time, appeased, but returned to those perilous regions no more.

Startling as these scenes were, they fell short in excitement and interest of Lady Huntingdon's chapel at Bath, the resort and talk of that thronged watering-place. It was opened in great state by Whitefield, and was in itself very attractive, being of neat architecture, with Gothic windows.

"I am glad," said Horace Walpole, "to see luxury creeping on them before persecution."

At a period when the greatest negligence prevailed, the service in this chapel was rendered seductive at once to the senses and the intellect. It is curious to find Lady Huntingdon adopting the practice of our modern clergy. At the upper end of her chapel was a broad *haut pas* of four steps, advancing at the middle; at each end of the broadest part were two eagles, with red cushions, for the parson and the clerk. Behind these were three more steps, on which stood an eagle for the pulpit, and to all three were scarlet arm-chairs. A band of boys and girls, with good voices, sang hymns in parts; and on either side of the *haut pas* was a balcony for the "elect ladies."

Besides this there was a sly corner for the bishops; and this was called by the witty Lady Betty Cobbe,

the "Nicodemite Corner." Into this, that enthusiastic proselyte delighted to smuggle bishops to see and hear unseen; and, perchance, to learn, for pulpit eloquence was at its lowest ebb; and the earnest boldness of Whitefield might not be without its fruits. Nor was Whitefield's idea a bad one: —

"It has long been my judgment," said he, "that it would be best for many of the present preachers to have a tutor and retire for awhile, and be content with preaching now and then, till they were a little more improved;" nor would the suggestion be misplaced even in these enlightened days.

To return to the chapel. Its pulpit was shared with Whitefield by the famous Romaine; or, to write in the "elect" style, "dear Mr. Romaine hath been much *owned* in it." Among the listeners in this really beautiful structure were the afflicted Lord and Lady Sutherland, who had repaired to Bath to recover, in the amusements of that place, from the death of their eldest daughter. But they found a greater solace in the chapel of Lady Huntingdon, where, as it happened, their funeral sermon was preached before a throng of nobility and fashion; for they died in the prime of life almost together, whilst their daughter, the late Duchess-Countess of Sutherland, was an infant. The death of Lady Sutherland was concealed from her mother, and that of Lord Sutherland alone disclosed. The unhappy mother set out to Bath to console her daughter. She met on the road from the north *two* hearses, and heard

that they were carrying her son-in-law and daughter to be entombed at Holyrood.

Another patient, pious listener in this assembly, was Lady Glenorchy; or, as she was afterwards called, the "Selina of Scotland." This lady formed her spiritual self upon the model of Lady Huntingdon, and received her first spiritual gifts in the chapel at Bath. A solemn scene, in which Lady Huntingdon played a conspicuous part, was enacted when the Earl of Buchan died, Whitefield attending by his bed-side. During a week, the coffin was exhibited in the chapel, where Whitefield preached twice a day, and all the rank and fashion of the city came to hear. On the morning of the funeral the sacrament was administered to the mourning family at the foot of the coffin. The assembled party then retired to Lady Huntingdon's house, and at eleven returned to the chapel, which was crowded to excess, the congregation being admitted by tickets distributed by the young Earl of Buchan. During five days this scene was repeated.

The "trophies" won by Whitefield and Lady Huntingdon in the Chesterfield family were also remarkable. The Lady Gertrude Hotham (the Earl's sister), her young ill-fated daughter, and her son (Sir Charles Hotham), were his avowed disciples. The Countess de Litz, the sister of Lady Chesterfield, was another proselyte; but, perhaps, the prize he most gloried in was the Countess of Chesterfield herself. The natural daughter of George I., she was as powerful at court as in the circles of fashion. She was foremost in every

scene of dissipation. She met Whitefield at Lady Huntingdon's, and became humble, demure, and "elect." At her ladyship's tea-table, Pulteney, Earl of Bath, laid aside his politics for a season, and sang hymns side by side with Lady Chesterfield. Lord Dartmouth, the patron of Newton of Olney, and the beloved of George III. and Queen Charlotte, was another star in this singular assemblage, composed, when we comprise Chesterfield and Bolingbroke, of the subdued scoffer, and the half-admiring, half-sneering sceptic; of the zealous enthusiast, and of the gentle, alarmed, inert believer. Scandal soon found out this capital theme for its venom. Whitefield, the archpriest, was attacked with a bitterness which, in the present day, would have evaporated into a good-humoured raillery. According to Cowper, he

> "Bore the pelting scorn of half an age;
> The very butt of slander, and the blot
> For every dart that malice ever shot.
> The man that mentioned *him* at once dismissed
> All mercy from his lips, and sneered and hissed."

And whilst he was thus reviled, the Countess of Moira, Lady Huntingdon's only surviving daughter, was dismissed from the office of lady of the bedchamber for refusing to play at cards on Sundays. Every possible crime was attributed to Whitefield; perhaps on the strength of his own confession, that he was at one time "hasting to hell." But this acknowledgment, prompted

by the wish to give hope to others, could only be turned against him by bad minds.

At length, after a life of untold exertions, his health gave way. He became "*nervous*," the prelude to more serious maladies. Lady Huntingdon attended upon him with all the kindliness of a gentle nature, and the zeal of a votary. She took him journeys, and tried to cheer his drooping spirits, but in vain. It was her lot to survive him long. He died in 1770, at Newbury Port, on his way to Boston, in the United States, after preaching two hours in the open air on the day before his decease. Seven years after his death his body was found perfect, without a trace of decomposition upon it, by an admirer who inspected it in the coffin. Southey was informed that this circumstance was owing to the vast quantity of nitre with which the earth abounds at Newbury Port; but by the elect this curious fact, for so it seems to be, was deemed a miracle: a belief which shows how completely Superstition justifies her name in every sect, whether among the ardent Calvinist or the dreamy enthusiastic believers in "The Lives of the Saints." Thirteen times did Whitefield cross the Atlantic, and he preached more than 18,000 sermons.

His noble and sorrowing proselyte survived until 1791. As her last hour approached, the aged lady remarked,—

"My work is done, and I have nothing now to do but to go to my Father."

She desired that her remains might be dressed in the white silk garments in which she had attended the opening of the chapel in Goodman's Fields; and she expired in that state of ecstatic hope and joy which might be anticipated from the mingled romance and earnestness of a character so beautiful, tinged with views which we feel to be mistaken, but which we are compelled to admire as lofty, disinterested, and devout. Her college in South Wales fell away after her death, being unendowed; and that at Cheshunt has, as far as we are informed, no further benefit from her bounty than the united names of Whitefield and Lady Huntingdon.

A severer affliction than even the early death of her children attended Lady Huntingdon's weary pilgrimage of life. Her eldest son, the young earl, had imbibed the principles of Bolingbroke and Chesterfield. She sorrowed over the young and still loved sceptic; and in vain did Theophilus Lindsay, a preacher, suggest for her relief the notion of *temporary* hell. It is not impossible that the young nobleman was disgusted by the excesses of his mother's zeal, and the phraseology of the "elect." She survived him, and, as he left no issue, the honours of the Hastings's were carried by Lady Moira into the Rawdon family.

With Lady Huntingdon expired much of the zeal of the fashionable world. Ancient beauties of the court of George II. returned into the bosom of the Church. The doors of Tottenham Court Chapel and the Taber-

nacle at Moorfields, head-quarters of the "elect ladies," were no longer crowded with coroneted chariots. The "elect" returned into the common herd of men who played basset, and women who loved drives and the Rotunda.

THE END.

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